NORWEGIAN AMERICAN LUTHERANISM

UP TO 1872

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NORWEGIAN AMERICAN LUTHERANISM

UP TO 1872

BY

J. MAGNUS ROHNE, TH.D.

(*Harvard*)

PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIANITY IN LUTHER COLLEGE

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To my wife

LOUISE REBECCA ROHNE

to whose patient labors, constant encouragement, and devoted forbearance this work, under God, is due

PREFACE

The Norse-American Centennial celebration of 1925, at which the President of the United States was the guest of honor, focused the attention of the American people on a group of citizens that had hitherto neither demanded nor received much attention. The signal honor paid them by the President aroused a widespread interest in the Norwegians and everything connected with them. The Norwegians, in turn, have made an earnest effort to answer most of the questions that have been asked in this connection, and the present volume is an attempt to furnish detailed information in regard to the early church life of this group. Many factors have worked together to make the Norwegians desirable and useful citizens, but none of them has exerted a tithe of the formative influence exercised by their church. Its influence has been felt at every turn; it has furnished undisputed and wise leadership; it has built influential institutions; and it has initiated and carried through large and important movements. In America, as in Norway, it is true, as Björnson said, that the church stands high in the minds of the Norwegian people. Nowhere else is the quiet, subdued strength of the Norwegian better reflected than in the powerful institutions of the church; nowhere, also, is his fierce and uncontrollable independence shown more strikingly than in his church controversies. Between these extremes lie many fine and homely virtues that make him extremely interesting and extremely human. Indeed, it is absolutely impossible for one who persists in ignoring Norwegian American Lutheranism to understand the Norwegian American group.

Somewhat typical of the friendly interest shown the Norwegian American group is the ready response with which the honorable Faculty of Harvard Divinity School met the author's suggestion that he write his dissertation for the Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) degree on a Norwegian American topic. Since his studies were in the field of Church History and the History of Dogma, he could have found no more interesting and profitable subject than *"Norwegian American Lutheranism up to 1872."* Throughout the preparation of the dissertation, the author kept in mind the possibility of having it published, and he has since received very cordial support for this idea, not only from the honorable Faculty, but from several eminent Norwegian American leaders to whom it has been submitted. After most painstaking revision, in which task the author has had the most expert help available, the book is now ready, and it is submitted

with a great deal of apprehension as to just what reception will be accorded it.

It might prove a distinct revelation to the student of American church history to hear that out on the middle-western plains there has sprung up a theology which is as vigorous and as daring in the subjects with which it grapples as New England theology itself. Unfortunately, the limits of the present work—1872—preclude a full demonstration of this fact; but there is enough here to impress the average student of American church history. More startling still is the institutional development among the Norwegians who are not, after all, one of the larger racial groups in America. Yet in 1925 this group had the largest Lutheran *college* for men in the United States, and also the largest Lutheran *college* for men and women in the United States.

Now a word to Norwegian American Lutherans. They should, of course, welcome this history. This is frankly a critical work attempted in the accepted scientific manner; hence what it lacks in exuberant praise, it should gain in even tenor and sincere restraint. The author has made it a point to be as conservative in his presentation as the historical facts will permit, although in the interest of historical veracity he has had to present also a number of unpleasant facts. This is the history of Norwegian American Lutheranism as accurately told as the author could garner it from a diligent examination of the sources. He has attempted to present the history fairly as *it is,* not as he would have liked to have it. Any alert reader should be able to detect this note of realism and make allowance for it.

Those I am indebted to are so numerous that I hesitate to begin to mention some of them for fear of overlooking others. First of all I wish to thank all my teachers at Luther College, at Luther Theological Seminary, at Hartford Theological Seminary, and at Harvard Divinity School for all their patient and valuable instruction, some of which I have tried to apply in this book. I also wish to thank the Board of Education of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America for a Theological Fellowship of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America; the Hartford Seminary Foundation for a Special Fellowship; and the President and Fellows of Harvard University, and especially the Society for Promoting Theological Education, for a Williams' Scholarship and a Williams' Fellowship.

Other authors deserve acknowledgment. This has been done quite fully in the footnotes. If any should be mentioned by name here, they must be Rev. J. A. Bergh, Prof. R. B. Anderson, Rev. H. Halvorsen, Dr. Knut Gjerset, Dr. O. M. Norlie, Dr. Theo. C. Blegen, and Dr. K. C. Babcock. Individuals who have assisted in the revision of the manuscript are also hereby gratefully remembered. Some of these are: Dr. Knut Gjerset, Prof. Karl T. Jacobsen, Prof. Carlo A. Sperati, Prof. David T. Nelson, all of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa; Dr. O. E. Brandt of Luther Theological Sem-

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Luther College, Decorah, Iowa.
June 5, 1926.

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3. *Kirketidende* printed by Hatlestad and Andrewsen
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   2. Did recommend education in the *Old Constitution*
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         3. Pastors managed to discuss question only at private pastoral meetings where they had Clausen alone
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NORWEGIAN AMERICAN LUTHERANISM

UP TO 1872

NORWEGIAN AMERICAN LUTHERANISM UP TO 1872

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY SURVEY

THE outstanding factor in Norwegian American Lutheranism today is the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. This body, composed chiefly of Norwegians, was formed by the union in 1917 of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Synod of America, Hauge's Evangelical Lutheran Synod of America, and the United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.[1] Although these and numerous lesser bodies all sprang from the undivided Lutheran State Church of Norway, divisions immediately arose on American soil due to certain geographic, social, political, and religious conditions existing in the Mother Church at the time of emigration. State control was powerful enough to hold together these elements in the Church of Norway; but when the Norwegians came to America they drank deep of the American spirit of liberty, and this combined with their individualistic tendencies caused them to break up into numerous small bodies, of which three were united in 1917. While the Norwegian Lutherans, like other branches of the Christian Church, have experienced all the bitterness of separation, on the other hand, they have had the very rare experience of having a real, bona fide, organic church union. Aside from the fascinating study of the struggles and hardships of these immigrant groups as they are striking root and adapting themselves little by little to their strange American surroundings, we must much more reckon with the present Norwegian Lutheran Church of America as a vital factor in the American church life of the Middle West. Besides counting men of the leading walks of life, such as governors and senators, among its members, it had grown in 1922 to the quite imposing membership of 492,235.[2] It raises over a million dollars a year under a budget system covering the four major branches of its work, namely, foreign missions, home missions, charities, and education. According to all indications, the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America promises to become as

[1] These bodies are commonly called the *Synod, Hauge's Synod,* and the *United Church,* respectively, and we shall use the shorter names in our narrative.

[2] H. G. Stub in *Lutheran World Almanac, 1922,* 64.

dynamic in its united efforts as it was wasteful in its divisive, individualistic efforts.

But it is a far cry from the first scattered beginnings of Norwegian American Lutheranism to the highly developed work of the present day. In order to understand these groups it is necessary to trace certain features back to their origins in Norway. Elements that have a shaping influence in the early factionalism which broke the Norwegian American Lutherans up into small groups, are the geography of Norway, social and civil revolutions, religious reforms, nationalism, a combination of religious and social reform groups, and, finally, emigration.

A Lutheran may live and thrive in any country and under any form of church and civil government, but a genuine Norwegian can only be produced in Norway. Norway, as is well known, is a long narrow strip of land in the northwest portion of the European continent. The land is broken up by high mountains into natural divisions or districts,[3] each with its own dialect, local patriotism, traditions, and characteristics. Before railroads were tunneled through the mountains, the difficulty of travel made communication slow and of little importance. As a result of his limited intercourse with the outside world, the native of these narrow valleys became very stolid and unreceptive toward new impulses and ideas from without, whereas, in the depths of his meditative soul, he reflected the high grandeur and solid verities by which he was surrounded. Clinging tenaciously to "what is" in his own little valley against all outside influences, he could be swayed, nevertheless, by some more aggressive native of the valley once this local "chief" or "king" had established his supremacy. This opportunity for local leadership made for a very high degree of individualism, and for independence in the leaders, who in ancient times had even been able to resist successfully all outside interference. But it also made for despotism, little concern for the rights of others, and a self-willed and arbitrary tendency in determining what should and should not receive support.

In his best moments, the native wondered what could be seen beyond the lofty horizon, but his first concern was with the great and actual human problem: How shall I provide for myself and my dear ones? Wick's description of Röldal gives an intimate glimpse of what could be found in many of the mountain valleys. He says:

> The valley is situated up among the mountains, fully fifty miles from the nearest arm of the sea. In the middle of the valley is a lake seven miles long and fully twelve hundred feet deep. Here around the borders of the lake, and up in the narrow ravine nearby, a thousand people make their home, and from their small mountain

[3] Some of the districts are Telemarken, Numedalen, Valdres, Sogn, Hedemarken, Namdalen, and Röldal. The country is divided into eighteen administrative districts or amts, one of which, Stavanger amt, plays an important part in Norwegian American church history.

> farms, from goats and reindeer that climb the mountain, and from the delicious trout caught in the lake, these easily contented inhabitants in the remote solitudes of the mountain region, by frugality and strict economy, obtain a scant living. The surrounding mountains rise five thousand feet above the sea, and on top of these the eternal snow has taken up its abode; and here you can take sleigh drives in the height of summer, while in the valley below the people can cure their hay and bask in the sun, the thermometer showing 68 degrees in the shade.[4]

Shorn of the optimism of the well-fed artist from the city who comes only in the summer when nature is in a friendly mood, this picture becomes full of grim realities. The hard-working native, whose crops fail because of short summers, and whose land can be tilled only in patches by hand, requiring the labor of himself and his wife as well, often lost sight of the glory of the landscape in the everyday toil and moil. Too proud to beg, too far removed from helpful suggestions by which he might better his lot, he had no choice, before emigration was popularized, but to enter, with all the physical resources he had developed, into the unequal contest with nature and his social environment. Little wonder, then, that, when he forgot his hard lot in a "social good time," he was as violent in his hilarity as he was in his work.

But even if his great efforts brought him very little tangible reward in the way of the necessities of life, he was laying up against the day of emigration a treasure of intangible value of which he had never dreamt. Babcock says:

> Nature is no spendthrift in any part of the Scandinavian peninsula; small economies are the alphabet of her teaching, and her lessons once learned are rarely forgotten. Her children of the North, therefore, down to the stolidest laborer, mountaineer, and fisherman, are generally industrious and frugal, and when they migrate to the American West, to enter upon the work of pioneering, with its stern requirements of endurance, patience, persistent endeavor, and thrift, they start out in the new life with decided temperamental advantages over most other immigrants, and even over most native-born Americans.[5]

This same author characterizes the Norwegians as lovers of adventure, as courageous in facing the future, as haters of slavery, as having clear, high ideals of personal and political freedom, and as adaptable to changes of climate, of conditions, of circumstances; and yet they have not degenerated into easily yielding to moods and whims even under the rapid changes of New World society. Then the author continues:

[4] Barthinius L. Wick, "Quakerism in Norway," in *The Friend,* 1894 (Philadelphia), 258.

[5] K. C. Babcock, *The Scandinavian Element in the United States,* 16.

> The Norwegian is above all democratic. He is simple, serious, intense, severe even to bluntness, often radical and visionary, and with a tendency to disputatiousness. There is an unmeasured quantity of passion and imagination in him, as there are unmeasured stores of power and beauty in the snows of his mountains and the waters of his coast. He has the capacity for high and strenuous endeavor, even verging on the turbulent, but he rarely has developed the qualities of a great leader. Like the Swede, the Norwegian is fond of music, but it is of a different sort. Both in his music and in his literature, the dramatic element is strong; no names in the realm of literature of the last generation stand higher than those of Ibsen and Björnson, who are first cosmopolitan, then Norwegian.

This, then, is the Norwegian as he appears to this observer from the sidelines. Unfortunately, it shall be our grim task to deal with him at his weakest, as his disputatiousness and individualism stand out most glaringly in the realm of religion. While his geographic and social environment thus contributed toward making him as healthy mentally and spiritually as he was physically, political and religious factors also play a part in determining his complex makeup. These last-named factors now demand our attention.

The latter part of the eighteenth century witnessed tremendous changes in the life of the peoples of the world. America had declared and won her independence; France had had her revolution; and Napoleon had forced practically all Europe into war. Norway was then under Denmark, and partly through the incompetence of the Danish-Norwegian ruler, partly through Russian aggression, and partly through England's nervousness, Denmark-Norway was forced to cast her lot with France and her allies against England and her allies. The English demolished the Danish-Norwegian fleet, captured and imprisoned thousands of men whom they huddled into dreadful prison ships, blockaded the ports, and nearly starved the people of Norway.[6]

In these dark hours new ideas struck root. The blockade severed Denmark and Norway, and Norway had to be put under the regency of Prince Charles Augustus. This lovable prince had the support of the Norwegian patriot, Count Herman Wedel-Jarlsberg, whose difficult task it was to supply the country with the necessities of life. With a greater degree of judicial and administrative autonomy than Norway had enjoyed for centuries, Norwegian patriotism reached fever heat. When Sweden half-heartedly undertook to invade Norway, the starved and ragged *bönder* (farmers) rose to the occasion, and defended their country in a border war against the Swedes under General G. M. Armfelt. After a few reverses due to failure to concentrate his forces, Armfelt was ordered to withdraw from Norwegian soil. Other enemies soon engaged the full attention of the Swedish king, forcing him to abandon temporarily

[6] The history of Norway is most easily accessible in Knut Gjerset, *A History of the Norwegian People* (Macmillan), 2 vols.

his designs on Norway. At the peace of Kiel in 1814, however, Norway was taken away from Denmark and handed over to Sweden. Norwegian patriotism, however, would not submit to any indignities at this time; at the meeting of the Norwegian leaders at Eidsvold, May 17, 1814, a constitution was drawn up along liberal lines, and preparations were made to defend it. After a mere show of force, Sweden agreed to recognize the constitution and entered into a "union" with Norway which lasted until 1905. In these strenuous times the *bönder* had won many new rights, but it was many years before they could successfully assert them. This was finally accomplished after a combination had been effected between the political and religious forces of the land.

Almost parallel with the political upheaval was a religious revival which swept over Norway with irresistible force. In Norway, as in other Lutheran lands, there had been a period of orthodoxy which inculcated a profound respect for doctrine and the things that were held sacred and, withal, put an indelible stamp of churchliness upon the solid and unchanging people of the remoter districts. The Bible, the Lutheran doctrine, the clerical office, the church, the liturgy, the hymns, yes, even the vestments, and practically everything connected with the church and its service were given a very elevated position. But mere intellectual orthodoxy lacked the power of changing the hearts of men; while Christianity was robust and strong at the top, it was anemic and powerless at the bottom.

As a nemesis upon the dead formalism came an aggressive and extremely moralistic pietism which presumed to regulate the behavior of men by private precept and governmental injunction. Its severe attitude is well illustrated by the following quotation from August Herman Francke: "All laughter is not forbidden, for it happens, indeed, that even the most pious may so heartily rejoice, not over worldly but over heavenly things, that his lips may show evidence of his mental delight in a faint laughter. But it easily becomes sinful, and paves the way for great distraction of the mind, which soon discovers that it has become too unthoughtful when it again wishes to meekly turn to God." [7] If pietism sobered the Norwegian people, it must have been for a relatively short time.

Pietism did, however, make some contributions that were to be of extremely great importance. Earlier in the eighteenth century, the pietist, Thomas von Westen, and six of his fellow-pastors ("the Seven Stars") distributed Bibles, tracts, postils, and hymn-books among the people in various parts of Norway. This was seed that was to bear an abundant harvest. Another event of far-reaching importance in the pietistic period was the introduction of the rite of confirmation into Norway. By the Ordinance of January 13, 1736, it was provided that the young communicants should formally renew their baptismal vow before their first communion, after being

[7] In Christen Brun, *Pietismens Begreb og Väsen,* 59, quoted by Gjerset, *History of the Norwegian People,* II, 332.

catechized in church in the presence of the congregation to prove that they had mastered the Christian fundamentals.[8] In order successfully to stand the test, they had to have a memoriter knowledge of the Five Parts of Luther's *Small Catechism* with appended table of duties and prayers. Pontoppidan's *Explanation* of Luther's *Catechism,* called *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed* (Truth unto Godliness), which appeared at this time, was soon made a textbook for confirmants. Stories from the Bible, called "Bible History," were either memorized or retold, and portions of the Bible, usually of the New Testament, were read. To qualify the children for this somewhat rigid examination, a compulsory education law was passed, January 23, 1739. Though this law was never fully enforced, it represented a very deep-seated educational ideal which the people very imperfectly shared. The confirmation training was in itself a valuable aid to education in general as it was an honor for life to have "stood first" on the "church floor." Not only has Norway kept in the front ranks of literacy to this day as a result of this law, but it has meant much to the religious life of Norway that most of the people could read, enabling the pious folk to edify themselves at home when the pulpit failed in this respect. A third event of great importance during this period was the passage of the Conventicle Act of 1741, forbidding laymen to preach. This was essentially a pietistic measure, though it was to be used against one who had much in common with the pietists.[9]

Rationalism gained the ascendancy at the University of Copenhagen, 1770-1780, and as Norway had no university of its own the young Norwegian pastors were naturally affected also. Toward the end of the century violent attacks were directed against the Church, Christianity in general, and the clergy in particular. The Danish author, Riegels, stamped theology as not only useless, but actually dangerous and harmful, and branded the clergy as the enemies of enlightenment. Agnostic journals flourished, as, for instance, Otto Horrebow's *Jesus og fornuften* (Jesus and Reason), and the extremely liberal F. C. Wedel-Jarlsberg wrote a book which bore the title *The Clerical Estate Ought to be Abolished.*[10] Since the church was to these men a mere institution for enlightening the people, Chr. Bastholm proposed that the term "minister" should be changed to "folk instructor" and "teacher of religion."[11] In harmony with this conception of their duties, the new pastors took great interest in the education and enlightenment of the people, improving the school system, establishing libraries and reading circles, centering these activities at times in the church building itself. Thus, to educate the farmers, the clergy converted their parsonage farms into

[8] K. Gjerset, *op. cit.,* II, 334, and A. C. Bang, *Den norske kirkes historie,* 417. The age of confirmation was about fourteen or fifteen years.

[9] The text of article sixteen of this law is found in M. O. Wee, *Haugeanism,* 62. See below, 13.

[10] *Den geistlige stand bör afskaffes* (1795-97).

[11] Osc. Alb. Johnsen, *Norges Historie,* V-2, 191 ff.

demonstration stations; they also wrote books on forestry, raising potatoes, killing weeds, vaccinating cattle, and the care of one's health. Indeed, some of these things were discussed even from the pulpits, as there is record of at least one pastor who edified his flock by preaching on vaccination on a Sunday morning.[12] Usually, however, these things were carried on outside the church. Though the clergy, as a consequence, often neglected their first and foremost duties as preachers of the Gospel, in the interest of truth it should be said that some of these men were orthodox even according to the criteria of later times.

Up to the close of the century the bishops, with one possible exception, were still orthodox. Bishop Christian Schmidt of Christiania (1773-1804) was strictly orthodox. Dr. Eiler Hagerup (1778-89) and the pious Dr. Hans Tybing (1789-98) in the bishopric of Christianssand were moderate pietists. Dr. Ole Irgens, bishop of Bergen (1779-1803), was moderately orthodox; his eminent successor, Johan Nordahl Brun, was thoroughly orthodox. By word and pen, Bishop Brun defended the old faith, making, for instance, a very able reply to the rationalist Bastholm. Dr. Joh. Kristen Schönheyder, bishop of Trondhjem (1788-1803), was affected by this new practical spirit, but his theology was of the old orthodox kind.[13] By the close of the century, then, the bishops were of the old type, and it is well known that Johan Nordahl Brun, in particular, kept a sharp eye on the pastors in his bishopric lest they fall into rationalism. It is most important to take due notice of this as Bishop A. C. Bang, in his otherwise very excellent book on Hans Nielsen Hauge, gives the impression through quotations from Hauge that practically all of the clergy had gone over to rationalism or were spiritually asleep by 1796, when Hans Nielsen Hauge appeared on the scene.[14] Since this has been widely quoted in Norwegian American circles without any reservation or criticism, it is pertinent to notice what the well-known D. Thrap writes in *Norsk Historisk Tidsskrift* (tredje räkke, tredje bind, 1895), p. 148: "We shall not here enter into the old controversy about rationalism's power within the Norwegian clergy 1796-1804; but it certainly can be stated as an accepted fact that the rationalists were not in the majority within the Norwegian clergy at that time." Nor has Bang, though repeatedly challenged to do so, furnished any proof for the sweeping statements regarding the apostasy of the Norwegian clergy at the time of Hauge. In a general way, however, Bang is correct in giving the impression that the spiritual life among the clergy was far from what it should have been.

With the accession of the Dane, Dr. Peder Hanson, to the bishopric at Christianssand, 1798, Norway had its first really rationalistic bishop. Energetically addressing himself to the task of ridding his bishopric of all "superstition," he attempted to reform the ritual and

[12] Johnsen, *op. cit.*, 192. [13] *Ibid.*, 193.
[14] A. C. Bang, *Hans Nielsen Hauge og hans Samtid*, 27 ff.

the vestments, and to introduce the semi-secular *Evangelical-Christian Hymnal* gotten out by a commission in 1798. But his success was very limited, wherefore he returned to Denmark.

Although rationalism was making some headway among the clergy, it did not gain much of a footing among the lay people. With the reverence for the Church and the Word handed down from the days of orthodoxy, and with the impetus pietism gave to family devotions, to the reading of the Bible, the postils of Luther and of Johan Arndt, and the singing of the powerful hymns of Kingo and Brorson in the homes, the people were not dependent upon the clergy for their spiritual nourishment; on the contrary, they resisted silently but effectively any attempt to remove "superstition" from their midst. Barthinius L. Wick quite correctly observes in another connection:

> The Norse people are a religious people, and have always held on to the old, discarding the new. As far back as history relates and the Saga goes, there has always been a belief in the future state. This would be more true in such an unhospitable clime than in warmer zones, where life may offer solace. In this cold, dark Northland, people find so little sunshine in their earthly habitations, which is a continual struggle for bread, [*sic*] that they feel there must be something beyond the grave, where the good can be rewarded and where evil can be justly punished. The inhabitants to this day believe in fatalism. The waterfalls are so high, the mountains so terrific, the storms blow with such a fury, the long dreary winters crush out everything, life itself—all this seems to point to inevitable necessity. "So far and no further" runs the maxim: "God hath so ordained," "It should so happen," "Man plans but the creator rules." [15]

Since these "superstitions" offered relief from a stern and unyielding nature, it would take more than one generation of rationalistic clergy to counteract them. The natives, furthermore, were not ready to accept new ideas with what they regarded as undue haste; one or two generations could easily afford to test these "new" ideas first.

Closely connected with this slow change of opinion were other geographic factors which made for the slow progress of rationalism. New ideas could be disseminated only very slowly; and then, due to the limited intercourse between the valleys at this time, even where new ideas did penetrate, they received but scanty attention. The only effective way of having the ideas disseminated would be to fill the parishes with rationalistic clergy from Copenhagen University, which, in the face of the open hostility of some of the bishops, and the antipathy of the people, was a slow process requiring the utmost caution and patience. This enforced reticence on the part of the ration-

[15] *The Friend*, 1894, 258.

alistic clergy possibly accounts, to a large extent, for the strange phenomenon Bishop Bang describes, when he says:

> As far as our fatherland [Norway] is concerned, it is evident that, on the whole, the people did not understand the new doctrine. One or another possibly noticed that the new pastor preached differently from his predecessor; but he could but faintly grasp the meaning of the unclear modes of expression in which the new doctrine was clothed. On the other hand, virtue and morality were preached so that the morals of the people were not broken down. But spiritual death and indifference went apace.[16]

To summarize, then, the obstacles in the way of a rapid spread of rationalism were: (1) The reverence for the Church and the Word since the days of orthodoxy; (2) the ability of the common people to read the devotional literature since the days of pietism; (3) the orthodoxy of the bishops and their general hostility to rationalism; (4) the stolidity of the people and their clinging to "what is"; (5) the difficulty of travel, making the rapid dissemination of new ideas practically impossible; (6) the slowness of the process of filling the parishes with rationalistic pastors; and (7) the lack of understanding and appreciation of these rationalistic tenets. In the face of these very great difficulties, it is exceedingly improbable that rationalism, since its breaking through in Denmark as late as 1770-80, should have been able in the space of less than twenty years, by the time Hauge began his work in 1796, so entirely to submerge practically all spiritual life in Norway that Hans Nielsen Hauge, like a second Noah, alone rode safely above the waves of rationalism and became the sole progenitor of the spiritual race in Norway. Such a claim has a strong dramatic appeal, to be sure; but when it also makes a serious demand to be accepted as historic fact, its pretensions must be curtailed. Constant repetition of this claim has so thoroughly convinced great portions of the Norwegian American Church of its validity, that anything less than a sweeping acknowledgment of it has been regarded as an unfriendly act over against this really great man. Men of more enthusiasm but less learning than Bishop Bang have gone so far in this matter that their hero has become a rock which has deflected the flow of Norwegian Lutheranism into several channels. Since there have always been those who could not subscribe to the full Haugean program, and since there have been those who trace their spiritual ancestry farther back than Hauge and say that Hauge himself was a child of the piety that had survived rationalism's onslaughts, these, out of respect for their spiritual forbears, feel that they must strongly protest against this sharp break in historic Christianity. Hauge was a child of the church he revived, not a missionary from abroad. Indeed, much of his strength lay in this, that he gave expression to the piety which lay dormant in the hearts of the people. In this connection it must

[16] A. C. Bang, *Den norske kirkes historie.*

also be noted that Bishop Bang was merely quoting Hauge, who, as a preacher of repentance, was painfully sensitive to the lack of active spirituality about him.[17]

While it is highly improbable that rationalism should have swept away practically all piety, leaving only spiritual darkness back of the bright and shining figure of Hauge, conditions were admittedly none too good in the State Church of Norway at his appearance on the scene. Even worse charges than rationalism must be hurled against some of the clergy; they were outright lazy—too lazy, in fact, to become rationalists. Owing their appointment directly or indirectly to the Danish crown, they were first and foremost officials of the State, with no sympathetic contact with the people. They kept within the law and performed in a perfunctory and listless manner their duties as the law prescribed; but more than this was necessary to energize the church forms and to vitalize the spiritual life of the masses. Worst of all, the bishops were relatively powerless in the face of a situation like this. And yet we find such men as Bishop Johan Nordahl Brun of Bergen and others working with a zeal surpassed only by Hauge himself. Brun, in particular, was a powerful preacher and an excellent writer; and by force of personality rather than the inherent power of his office as bishop, he administered the affairs of his diocese in a fearless and highly exacting manner. Nor was the influence of this dominating character limited to the diocese of Bergen. If such men are not in Hauge's class, they certainly deserve at least a very large place as preparing the way for him, and supporting him in principle, if not exactly in deed. It is historically unjustifiable, therefore, to discount all that had been done before Hauge's time in order to enhance the glory of Hauge; Hauge was indebted to the past fully as much as the present is indebted to Hauge.

Although the extreme claims for Hans Nielsen Hauge must be discounted, a saner and truer estimate of his work will still give him the first and most glorious place in the history of the Norwegian Church. Born of peasant stock near Sarpsborg in 1771, the gifted though quiet and introspective lad was given only such schooling as the common district school afforded. At thirteen his deeply religious nature was stirred by an accident in which he came near drowning. Staggered at the fearful thought that he might have gone into eternity unprepared, he addressed himself to the task of setting his house in order by an intensive study of the Bible and such devotional literature as he found in his home. In due time he found peace for his troubled soul, but he was soon disturbed by the thought that countless of his fellow-men all about him were not at peace with their God. When it became apparent to him that the clergy were not leading men to God, he did not let the fact that he was unordained and relatively untutored deter him, but set out to preach

[17] In *Hans Nielsen Hauge og hans Samtid*, 30, Bang says: "This is Hauge's view of his age."

the Word of God in the full conviction of his earnest soul. For eight years, beginning in 1796, he carried on his work in spite of all difficulties, with an almost incomprehensible ardor, walking about ten thousand miles afoot from place to place, preaching from two to four times a day, doing personal work, writing hundreds of tracts and devotional books, and carrying on an extended personal correspondence.[18] Besides this he also carried on a number of practical enterprises. He established a paper mill, a stamping mill, a bone mill, a flour mill, a tannery, a foundry for church bells and small cannon.[19] And during the English blockade he was released from prison to manufacture salt as he was about the only one in the land who could do this. He engaged in trade in Bergen and along the sea coast, and in thousands of ways helped his adherents in their practical affairs. An indefatigable worker himself, he demanded industry and thrift, not laziness and idling, from his adherents.

In his preaching, this modest and self-sacrificing layman swept everything before him. Driven by a boundless zeal and speaking from personal experience about the great questions of the soul, his eloquence rose to such heights that he touched the heart and mind and conscience of everyone who came within the reach of his soul-arresting message. With his simple message of sin and grace culled from his Bible and postils, he became the personification of God's wrath against sin and of his infinite grace to the sinner. As Luther's theses struck a reverberant note in Germany, so did Hauge's simple but compellingly earnest preaching reverberate to the remotest parts of Norway. Borne on wings of angels, the spirit-filled message could have made no profounder impression; the man Hauge was completely consumed with zeal, and his message, as from another world, burned itself into the soul of Norway. From far-off hill and hamlet reëchoed the Pentecostal cry: "What shall we do to be saved?" At the mill, in the field, in the store, the question of eternal salvation was discussed both privately and publicly. Reticence is a national trait of the Norwegian; yet the reticent and silent Norwegian broke forth into rapture over this new thing. Laymen, like the Galilean fishermen, left their occupations, and began preaching about the one thing they knew. Possibly few revivals have so thoroughly gripped a whole nation as this did; never, at least, has the Spirit of God been so active among the average men and women in Norway as at this time.

Hauge denounced wickedness in high and low places. Especially strong was his denunciation of the clergy who were not doing their full duty. They were spiritually dead; they were dumb mouths, dogs who did not bark, watchers who gave no cry. While thus attacking the dead orthodoxy and the nerveless rationalism among the clergy, he was intensely loyal to the Lutheran State Church and did not have the remotest idea of leaving it. Even at the end of his life, after he had suffered every form of persecution at the hands

[18] A. C. Bang, *ut supra*, 135. [19] M. O. Wee, *Haugeanism*, 26.

of the State Church officials, Hauge in his testament advised his followers to be loyal to the Church. This revealed a beautiful side of his character; as a true saint of God he suffered everything for His cause, but harbored no ill will against his persecutors.

It was inevitable that Hauge should clash with the clergy. Article XIV of the *Augsburg Confession* requires that "no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments, unless he be regularly called." The clergy, therefore, stoutly held that Hauge had no right to teach publicly since no local congregation had called him. Pious men like Bishop Johan Nordahl Brun and others, whose sympathies Hauge naturally should have retained, were chilled in their ardor when Hauge went into business in Bergen in 1801, as they felt he was capitalizing his popularity as a preacher. This "unprofessional" action these men were great enough to have overlooked, had there not lurked a grave menace back of it. Since Hauge's business was carried on for and by Haugeans, under the stress of clerical and governmental opposition, organized business might easily go over into organized dissent.[20] While the opponents took no steps to block Hauge's work, they were either openly unfriendly to him or else passively disinterested.

Hauge and his followers were repeatedly arrested for being "idlers" and "tramps," against whom there were stringent laws. When Hauge and the traveling lay preachers were thus accosted, they were brought before the court of the house of correction (*tugthus ret*). In the country, this court was presided over by the county judge (*sorenskriver*); in the city, by the town judge (*byfoged*). No counsel was granted for the defense in order that "justice might not be unnecessarily delayed through parleyings and technicalities." The guilty were given a term of arrest in the house of correction, the length of the term being decided by the commission of the poor, consisting of the pastor, the elders, and two men appointed by the sheriff.[21]

The decisive opposition, however, came from the rationalistic clergy. Rationalism was here confronted by a force which was so diametrically opposed to its own very being that it either had to give Haugeanism a mortal thrust or be itself put out of existence. Characteristically enough, Bishop Peder Hansen sent in a most violent report about Hauge, dated April 24, 1804. The Department of State took no immediate notice of it, but when further complaints came in to the effect that Hauge was also engaged in illegal commercial enterprises, the case took on a more serious aspect, as Hauge was not only violating a dead-letter law, the Conventicle Act of 1741, but he was transgressing the recently enacted Monopoly Law of 1797.

Article sixteen of the Conventicle of 1741 reads:

[20] D. Thrap, "Hans Hauges Fängsling" (imprisonment) in *Historisk Tidsskrift*, tredje räkke, tredje bind, 1895, 152.
[21] M. O. Wee, *op. cit.*, 24.

> It shall, furthermore, be absolutely prohibited for anyone, either a man or a woman, married or unmarried, to travel from place to place, alone or in company with others, or to hold meetings. Each person shall remain in his own particular calling, live quietly, support himself honestly, eating his own bread; but people may visit each other, in order to help and edify each other privately. No public gatherings must be allowed. But women, especially unmarried women, shall remain where they are, serve, work, and edify themselves quietly and learn from others, as the Scriptures enjoin, and as it behooves their sex. Let them not imagine that they have any call to teach and preach. It shall be allowed, however, if they are fit for such work and if anyone desires to engage them to teach their children at home, with the consent of the authorities and under supervision of the minister, to read to the girls and to instruct them in Christianity and in branches of knowledge that would properly benefit them. They shall also be permitted, if they are fit for it, and if they are called to it, quietly to be of service to their own sex, by way of teaching and edifying. But this must not cause any stir, nor draw any gathering.[22]

The Monopoly Law of 1797 provided that no one but those who had been granted a royal privilege by the Chamber could trade with the people along the coast. Hauge's ship *Anne Helene,* with Knud Hellestvedt as captain, made a trip north at Christmas time, 1803, with the result that Hellestvedt was arrested January 5, 1804. Since the skipper sailed in Hauge's name and the profits were to be used "to convert men," the matter was taken up by the Department of State, June 23, 1804. On October 24, 1804, Hauge was arrested on the double charge of violating the Conventicle Act of 1741 against lay preaching, and the Monopoly Law of 1797.

While the government may have acted within its formal rights in arresting Hauge on these two counts, the officials certainly should have given Hauge a speedier trial. With the exception of a short respite in 1808, when he was released to manufacture salt for his countrymen during the trying times of the English blockade, Hauge was detained from 1804 till 1814. At the end of this time he was found guilty of the following offenses: (1) he had traveled and preached contrary to the Conventicle Act of 1741; (2) he had encouraged others to do so; and (3) he had used harsh language against the clergy. Unmindful of the fact that his long term in prison might have been punishment enough, the court imposed a fine of one thousand rigsdaler and costs.[23] Broken in health and penniless, he was unable to continue his work; his adherents, the Haugeans now numbering thousands, therefore bought a small farm, *Bredtvedt,* for him near Christiania, where he resided until his death in 1824.[24]

This deplorable affair has had unfortunate results not only in

[22] *Ibid.,* 62.
[23] A. C. Bang, *Hans Nielsen Hauge og hans Samtid,* 473.
[24] Knut Gjerset, *History of the Norwegian People,* II, 404.

the Church of Norway, but also in America. There is no doubt that Hauge suffered great injustice. It is also quite likely that the clergy, with the rationalists in the lead, used the machinery of government to subdue this persistent and uncompromising preacher of righteousness. Religion was an absolute issue in those days; Hauge himself, at least, certainly did not consider himself the exponent of doctrinal compromise. He struck some very vigorous and telling blows at the system that struck back and crushed him. No matter what the merits of the case were, it is true that in the popular mind Hauge has stood as a martyr, "the living zealous preacher of Christianity, who was rewarded by his government by prison and fine for his good deeds. It has long been evident to many," the eminent jurist D. Thrap continues, "that he could not remain standing in this light, when a closer examination of his life's work and the times in which he lived could be made."[25] Probably the popular estimate should be somewhat qualified in the light of Dr. Thrap's investigations.

In the meantime, the movement was gaining friends among the clergy. Contrary to expectations, there were no outbursts of fanaticism as was the case in connection with the Herrnhut movement; indeed, under the wise guidance of Johan Haugvaldstad, Hauge's successor, excesses were eliminated and the overzealous were curbed. There was sufficient positive fruit to awaken the admiration of the clergy, and the fair-minded among them were not slow in recognizing this. Rev. Claus Pavels estimated the movement thus: "That he [Hauge] has founded a sect which still exists, the members of which distinguish themselves by piety, virtue, good order, diligence, and peacefulness, in short, nearly everything which constitutes civic virtue, and tends to strengthen society, none but the most biased can deny." [26] In 1815 two theological professors,[27] two bishops, and fifteen clergymen visited Hauge at *Bredtveldt,* and many of those who had opposed him were now openly friendly. With characteristic greatness of mind Hauge bore no grudge against his persecutors, and he certainly did not blame the clergy as a whole for the injustice done him.

Soon after Hauge's death, however, other factors entered in to form a cleavage between laity and clergy all along the line. Dr. Gjerset describes the long established conditions which were largely to blame for this:

> The cleavage in Norwegian society was caused by the Reformation when the Danish language was introduced as the church and literary language. The city population and the official class, including the clergy, which were strongly mixed with foreign elements, had thoroughly assimilated the Danish language and culture, while the

[25] D Thrap, *op. cit.*, 167. [26] Quoted by K. Gjerset in *op. cit.*, II, 405.
[27] Svend Borchmann Hersleb and Stener Johannes Stenersen, the two professors of theology at the newly established Royal Frederik University at Christiania (now Oslo). A. C. Bang, *op. cit.*, 485.

rural population still spoke their own tongue and adhered to their old customs. Under the shelter of absolutism in the period of the union with Denmark, which fostered a distinct aristocratic spirit among the cultured classes, this condition had assumed a rigid permanence, and the *bönder* had become sharply differentiated from the city population and official class, not only in customs and language, but also in views and sympathies. The men of Eidsvold had created liberal political institutions suited to the most democratic society, but during the great European reaction, 1814-1830, it became evident that the old spirit of class prejudice, desire for special privileges, and the antipathy to the common people still prevailed in higher social circles. The officials showed strong bureaucratic tendencies, and continued to rule in the old spirit, even under the new constitution. Their views and tastes remained to a large extent unchanged, and they were glad to settle down to the old ways, not thinking that the great political change would necessitate a radical social readjustment. What the result would be if the *bönder* should assume political leadership was a thought which had not yet dawned upon their mind, as they do not seem to have considered such a state of affairs to be within the realm of possibility.[28]

But the officials and *bönder* were soon called upon to face the new situation. The Norwegian poet, patriot, and liberal, Henrik Wergeland, scrutinized the whole social order and tested it by what was *Norwegian;* and *Norwegian,* according to the constitution, as he understood it, was synonymous with *democracy,* possibly of a rather advanced French revolutionary type. His worthy literary opponent was Johan Sebastian Welhaven, who agreed with the conservative upper classes that Norway still had to depend on Denmark for her higher culture. Incidentally, this was a defense of the present system with a privileged upper class. The struggle between the giants raged from 1830 till Wergeland's death in 1845.[29]

While these storms were raging on the literary peaks, the *bönder* below were not idle spectators. As early as 1821 they had made a slight demonstration and again in 1830. In 1833 John Neergaard from Nordmör, western Norway, gathered the *bönder* into political meetings, described the hard times, said these were due to the upper classes who used their majority in the Storthing to shift the taxes to the people, and by the aid of his *Olabok* stirred the lower classes to open revolt, so that in the elections of 1833, for the first time in Norwegian history, the *bönder* gained a majority in the national legislature. This assertion of power by the *bönder* was due to the awakened democratic spirit and the feeling of self-respect engendered in the common man growing out of the Haugean move-

[28] Knut Gjerset, *op. cit.,* II, 465.

[29] As tangible fruits of Wergeland's efforts can be mentioned the Dissenter Law of 1845, the annulment of the Conventicle Act of 1741, and the amendment to the Constitution in 1851 granting Jews the right to reside in Norway with all the privileges enjoyed by other citizens.

ment. With the Haugean, Ole Gabriel Ueland of Stavanger, as leader, the *bönder* waged a very bitter fight in the legislative assembly and other public forums against the office-holding estates (among them the clergy), and forced these to yield on many points of privilege and prestige, thus elevating the lower classes to a much higher sphere of opportunity and self-esteem. After repeated rebuffs, they succeeded in 1836 in wresting the power of local government from the upper classes. As we see it now, the *bönder* were entirely within their rights in this, and though they may have gone to extremes at times, they stopped far short of what was done in other places in Europe a decade later. Possibly the upper classes should be given some credit for not driving the lower classes to violence by obstinate resistance to the latter's demands.

Our interest in this whole social revolution is to show that the Haugean movement, which started as a purely religious "awakening," now had assumed a somewhat different character, its new program attracting elements that were not moved primarily by religious motives. The breach between the clergy and Hauge which had begun to heal was torn wide open when the clergy and the *bönder* were placed on opposite sides in this most bitter struggle for power. Hauge was a *bonde,* and it was indelibly stamped upon the popular mind that he had innocently suffered at the hands of the overbearing officials and clergy. In the heat of the struggle, Hauge's blood was regarded as being particularly on the head of the clergy, and it must needs take a long time to erase this impression after it had been so thoroughly impressed upon the popular mind. Although he had long since died in peace, Hauge was now hurled like a huge boulder into these surging waters of human passion, and while his personality was not able to deflect the stream so as to make it run altogether in the direction of the *bönder,* it did act as a point of cleavage between lay and academic Christianity. There was a crass and unworthy scramble for power on both sides, and it was most unfortunate that the immigrants who began arriving in America in 1821, 1825, 1836, and later, should bring with them a vivid recollection of a social struggle in which they generally sided with Haugeanism against the State Church.

The cleavage was not so evident in Norway after a comparatively short time. Johan Haugvaldstad, ever the worthy follower of Hauge, tried to curb the unruly elements in his effort to bring the movement back into purely religious channels. A great aid to the work of reunion had arisen in university circles in 1840, in the form of a spiritual awakening which, though different from Haugeanism, yet in many ways in its earlier stages appealed to the Haugeans. We have noticed that Stener Johannes Stenersen and Svend Borchmann Hersleb were appointed as professors of theology at the Norwegian university founded in 1813. These men, together with Wilhelm Andreas Wexels, catechist and preacher at Our Saviour's Church in Christiania, were greatly influenced by the Grundtvigian awakening

in Denmark. This was to a great extent an academic awakening with a wholesome emphasis on the Means of Grace, but it was in great danger of overemphasizing the importance of the so-called *Apostles' Creed* and the baptismal formula. It also taught a conversion after death. These elements were either suppressed or not emphasized in Norway by its earlier exponents; consequently when a wholesome religious influence radiated from the university, the Haugeans were very much gratified. When another awakening, anti-Grundtvigian in the above respects, began in 1850 under the later theological professors, Gisle Johnson and Carl Paul Caspari, the breach between lay and academic Christianity was nearly altogether healed. In the next decade concessions were voluntarily made on both sides, the laymen being given more responsibility in the church life, and also abandoning some of their rather extreme claims in regard to the performance of ecclesiastical functions. To the clergy as a class was restored the undisputed right to perform purely clerical functions, the office of the ministry thereby regaining some of the prestige it had lost during the social revolution.

There is apparently no reason why this gratifying result could not have been brought about on American soil even more quickly than in Norway. But the Norwegian Church had the advantage of being held together until the breach was healed. In America there was no governmental force that could act as surgeon's stitches; once the wound was broken open it began to fester, and it could only heal by growth from the bottom and out. The immigrant to America, hot with the issues that were being fought out when he emigrated, and receiving no new impulses from the homeland, stopped short at those issues which to him became fixed until submerged by other issues in his own American community. But the fundamental part of him, the very heart of his being and character, was always bound up with Norway as it was, or, rather, as he thought it was, when he emigrated. And since patriotism, with its grand mixture of geography, national characteristics, external and internal politics, social and financial conditions, had been most intimately connected with religion and all that it meant of complications and struggles, the immigrant, in trying to reproduce as much of this as he could on American soil, found himself in a quandary. It is, for instance, difficult to be a mountaineer on the wide Western prairies; but this great problem of adjustment he solved far better than his church problems, possibly because the former did not touch his past as vitally as the latter did. As a result of the religious complexities which were uppermost in the minds of men when they emigrated, the various Norwegian groups in America founded a great many church bodies, which, though they were a crude mosaic of conflicting and glaring colors, still furnished a variety of choice that should satisfy the desires of nearly anyone. Church controversies possibly also appealed to the combative spirit in these Vikings. On the whole, one must say that much energy has been wasted, but

now that the results are pooled by the union of 1917, there do seem, also, to be quite gratifying results.

We have thus accounted for the "Norwegian" and the "Lutheran" part of our subject. We must now account for the last portion, namely, how the Norwegians came to America and now fittingly add "American" to their name.

As a matter of fact, Norway was overcrowded and therefore unable to furnish sustenance and employment to all her people. Dr. Flom asserts that eighty-five percent of the immigrants to America were from the rural districts, and he stoutly holds, in opposition to R. B. Anderson,[30] that not religious persecution, but material considerations, played the most important rôle in promoting the emigration. Dr. Flom summarizes the influences that have promoted Scandinavian emigration to the United States in the nineteenth century in the order of their importance as follows:[31] First, the prospect of material betterment and the love of a freer and more independent life; second, letters from relatives and friends who had emigrated to the United States and visits of these again to their native country; third, the advertising of agents of emigration; fourth, religious persecution at home; fifth, church proselyting; sixth, political oppression; seventh, military service; and eighth, the desire for adventure. Fugitives from justice, he says, have been few, and paupers and criminals in the Scandinavian countries are not sent out of the country; they are taken care of by the government.

Most of these causes are self-explanatory. The Quakers and other non-Lutheran sects, particularly the Mormons, would come under the class of those who proselyte and then induce their members to emigrate. In the earlier period, political oppression would possibly play a more prominent part. Military service was compulsory, but it did not last long; it acted chiefly as a crisis at which the young man would have to make up his mind as to whether he should emigrate or remain in the homeland. Dr. Flom has gone into the causes for emigration quite thoroughly, and in Chapter VI of his book he makes a good case for placing the hope of material gain first. Other authors bear him out in this. In fairness to Prof. R. B. Anderson, who makes religious persecution the first cause, it must be said that he wrote about the period between 1821 and 1840. But even then "persecution" took place only toward the end of that period; the Sloop party certainly cannot be compared to the "Mayflower" Pilgrims in point of suffering in the homeland.

Mr. Gottenborg, in an article in the *Nordmandsforbund,* April, 1913, presented the whole case of emigration statistically. It will be noted that he also agrees that the material rather than the religious interests were paramount. He says:

[30] R. B. Anderson, *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration (1821-1840); its Causes and Results* (Madison, Wis., 1896), 45 ff.

[31] G. T. Flom, *A History of Norwegian Immigration to the United States from Earliest Beginning to Year 1848* (Iowa City, Iowa, 1909), 88.

While the number of emigrants in the period 1836-1842 only reached a few hundred, it rose in 1843 to 1600, and has since not fallen below 1000 a year. In 1847 the potato crop in Norway was poor, times were hard, grain prices high, and economic conditions generally unfavorable. For this reason emigration rose to 4000 or 5000, and this number remained quite constant with few exceptions from 1851 to 1865, though the economic conditions improved. . . . In 1866 emigration increased suddenly to 15,455 from 4000 the year previous, owing chiefly to the closing of the Civil War, which had hindered emigration. In the following years the number was gradually reduced from 10,357 in 1873 to about 4000 in 1874-1878, because of improved economic conditions, extensive railway construction, and other large enterprises. But in the eighties another period of hard times came. Railway construction ceased, and the emigration reached a volume greater than ever before. In 1882 the number rose to 28,804, and during that whole decade it exceeded 20,000 per year, except in 1884-1886 and 1889, when the number was 13,000 to 15,000 a year. The same conditions existed in the beginning of the nineties. In 1893 about 19,000 emigrated, but in 1894 the number was reduced to 5642 because of good times. . . . In 1899, when the times again became hard, the number rose again. In 1900 it reached 11,000, in 1901 13,000; it soon increased to 20,000, and in 1903 it reached about 27,000. It remained above 20,000 till 1907, but it dropped in 1908 to 8500 because of hard times in America. In 1909 it rose again to 16,000, and in 1910 to almost 19,000, but dropped again in 1911 to about 12,000, and in 1912 to 9105.

According to Mr. Gottenborg's calculations, 707,986 persons emigrated from Norway in the period from 1850 to 1911.[32] Since by far the greatest proportion of these are of the farmer class, it was only natural that they should settle in the great farming belts of the middle-western states. There are approximately two and a quarter million people of Norwegian extraction in the United States at present.[33]

We have thus viewed the Norwegian Lutheran at his home in Norway; we have seen the Church in unity of spirit and body; we have seen the unity of spirit cleft, but the body held together by the power of the State; we have seen how the Norwegians have emigrated to America; and in the following chapters we shall see how the immigrant transplants to American soil the Church which with him touches all the tender roots of his existence.

Breaking the homeland ties to embark upon the uncertain quest of a better home in a strange land is not done without a severe test of the emigrant's fortitude and determination. Bravely he decides

[32] Quoted by Knut Gjerset in *History of the Norwegian People*, II, 600. For a full bibliography on Scandinavian emigration to America see Kendric Charles Babcock, *The Scandinavian Element in the United States* (University of Illinois Press), 181-204.

[33] O. M. Norlie in *History of the Norwegian People in America* (1925), 313, estimates that there were 2,168,355 people of Norwegian extraction in America in 1920.

to go. He packs his modest belongings into a home-made chest, arranges for passage, and is about to leave. Suddenly it dawns upon him that he is leaving much. He looks to the hilltops; he goes out into the fields; he caresses the dog and the favorite horse. He bids farewell to his neighbors. He winces a little when he takes leave of a certain playmate of his youth; but there is a gleam of hope in this as he has dreamt dreams together with her, and these dreams must come true. Dreams are very comforting, and under their spell he is almost happy.

He goes home. At home, however, his optimism fails him. He suddenly realizes that his parents are old; today they are very old and very quiet. Still he must go. He resolutely burns the bridges by a hasty though tender farewell. Not much is said—what can be said? He sets out bravely; but he knows that though mother smiled when he went there were tears in her smile—and she probably does not smile now as evening comes on and memories besiege her. Father does not say much; he never does. But the devotions in that lonely home are fervent that evening, and they pray God to comfort them and to keep and prosper their boy. And God in Heaven has heard many of these prayers.

CHAPTER II

IMMIGRATION AND UNORGANIZED LAY ACTIVITY

In a very peculiar sense, Norwegians have a claim to American citizenship. The exploits of the Norsemen in Sicily, Constantinople, France, England, and the Isle of Man need merely be mentioned to conjure up a whole array of instances of devastations, to be sure, but also—and this is too often forgotten—of fine systems of government and swift executions of justice. It was only natural that this fearless and enterprising race of Vikings should satisfy its curiosity in regard to lands lying relatively near its base of operations on the Western Hemisphere, once it had reached Iceland.

According to the venerable Prof. R. B. Anderson,[1] the Norsemen discovered Iceland about the year 860 and fourteen years later laid the foundations of a democracy that was to last for four hundred years. Gunnbjörn Ulfson from Norway first sighted land to the westward of Iceland, and a century later, that is, about 981, Eiric the Red set out to find and explore this land.[2] After a successful search, he spent two years exploring the land which he called Greenland in order to attract settlers. Since parts of Iceland and all of Greenland belong to the Western Hemisphere, this discovery is of extraordinary importance.

Once the Norsemen had thus penetrated within striking distance of the American mainland, it was only natural that these intrepid rovers of the sea should discover America. So they did. Bjarne Herjulfson probably touched American soil in 986; Leiv Eiriksson [3] certainly did in the year 1000.[4] Unequal to the task of settling Vinland the Good, as they called the new land, and unable to subdue the *Skrælings,* as they called the American Indians, the Norsemen finally, after the Black Plague, were compelled to leave America to the red men. The last known voyage to America took place in 1347, three hundred and fifty years after its discovery, and only one hundred and forty-five years before its rediscovery by Colum-

[1] "First Chapter of Civilization on the American Continent" in *Scandinavia,* January, 1924 (Fargo, N. D.), 48.

[2] Knut Gjerset, *History of Iceland* (Macmillan), 93 ff.

[3] Spelling Leiv Eiriksson determined by the Department of Church and Education in Norway. Pronounce *ei* as in *eight.*

[4] R. B. Anderson, *America not Discovered by Columbus.* In the fourth edition of this work is found Paul Barron Watson, "A Bibliography of the Pre-Columbian Discoveries of America," a paper prepared as a thesis for one of Dr. Emerton's history classes at Harvard.

bus. Just how much information Columbus got from these hardy, pelagic voyagers is somewhat uncertain, although Prof. R. B. Anderson, after sixty years of research, declares emphatically—and furnishes proof for his statement—that there is a definite connection between the voyages of the Norsemen and of Columbus.[5] At any rate, the Norsemen are not to be regarded as "newcomers" to America.

Hand in hand with the work of exploration went religious and missionary work. Though Eiric the Red never relinquished the Asa faith, many of his contemporaries did so after the year 1000, when Christianity was introduced into Greenland. Seventeen bishops served Greenland in this period, and one of these, Eirik Upse, who became bishop of Greenland in 1112, went on a missionary journey to Vinland as early as 1121.[6] Since the religious work of the time made much use of force, it had to be abandoned when the Norsemen withdrew from Vinland.

When the work of exploring and settling America was again taken up as a result of the discoveries of Columbus, the Norsemen again played a rôle somewhat in proportion to their resources and man power. On the whole, conditions in Norway were such that they deprived her of her pristine vigor and enterprise; hence Norway took no illustrious part in the very early history of America's second exploration and settlement. What Norway lacked in independent action under her foreign masters—for masters they must be called —was somewhat counterbalanced by the energy and reckless daring of a few individuals.

One small, but notable, group was the one sent out by King Christian IV of Denmark-Norway in two boats under the command of Jens Munk. Captain Munk, with sixty-five men, among them Rev. Rasmus Jensen and a ship doctor, set out on May 16, 1619, to discover the Northwest Passage, which, indeed, later was discovered by the Norseman, Roald Amundson. They came to Hudson Bay July 1, 1619, and sailed back and forth in this bay until September 7, when they went into winter quarters. In his diary, now in the library at Copenhagen University, Captain Munk describes the terrible hardships of that lonely Northern winter on American soil. Pestilence, hunger, cold, and lonesomeness laid all but four of them low, and these, by a veritable miracle, succeeded in making their way back to civilization. Captain Munk himself survived, but Rev. Rasmus Jensen met a most heroic death and became the first Lutheran pastor to be buried on American soil.

From September, 1619, to January, 1620, almost a year before the Mayflower Pilgrims came, regular Lutheran services were conducted in the far North. In a most touching manner Captain Munk describes this sorely tried congregation and its efforts to keep up the church customs of the homeland. It must, indeed, have been

[5] See his article in *Scandinavia* quoted above.
[6] *Ibid.* See also K. Gjerset, *op. cit.*, III.

a Christmas never to be forgotten by the few whose memory was not cut short by sudden death, for Jens Munk writes:

> The holy Christmas Day we all celebrated and kept as a Christian should. We had a sermon and chanting, and after the sermon we gave the pastor a Christmas offering according to the good old custom, each one according to his means. Even though money was not plentiful among us, each gave what he had. In lieu of money one man gave a white fox skin, so that the pastor could line his coat; but, alas, after that he was not permitted to wear it out.[7]

As a dying man preaching to dying men, Jensen continued his work, though the plague had already marked him as one of its victims. On January 23, so Munk relates, the plague-ridden pastor sat up in his cabin and preached his last sermon to his heartbroken parishioners. Exactly a month later he died. Thus passed the worthy pioneer Lutheran pastor on American soil; he died, as he had lived, sharing the fate of his congregation. Fortunately, this congregation had its messenger who has preserved for us an account of its glorious, though futile, struggles against odds that were too great for it.

Ten years later, Norwegians took an active, though possibly not a leading, part in the settlement of what is now New York. In true American fashion these Norwegians fused with other racial elements, furnishing the racial background for such prominent families as the Vanderbilts and others.[8] Some of the Norwegians contributed to the Lutheran religious life that was carried on with great difficulty by the Dutch under Peter Stuyvesant's intolerant governorship.[9] Thus there were Norwegians in the congregations of the Lutheran pastor, Rev. John Ernest Gutwasser, who came to New Amsterdam on June 6, 1657, and was sent away by Stuyvesant, after having served in America somewhat over two years. This is shown by the following quotation found in Neve's church history:

> The first Dutch congregation in the new world was truly cosmopolitan; it consisted of a number of Dutch families, but the majority of the members were Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and German people. The leading man of this congregation was a German, Paulus Schrick, of Nuremberg . . . and the man who was suspected by the Reformed preachers of Amsterdam as sheltering during the whole winter the first Dutch Lutheran minister to the new world, John Gutwasser, was a Norwegian, Laurence Noorman.[10]

Although the Norwegians shared in the work carried on under the leadership of other racial groups, they never became sufficiently

[7] *The Lutheran World Almanac*, 1921, 66.
[8] John O. Evjen, *Scandinavian Immigrants in New York, 1630-1674.*
[9] J. L. Neve, *A Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America*, 22 ff.
[10] *Op. cit.*, 24. Quotation is from Evjen, in Hauch, R. E. XXIV, 539.

strong to organize their own religious groups. Nor did they seem to care much for the preservation of their own group, as they quite readily adopted Dutch names and Dutch customs.[11] Not until two centuries later, that is, in 1821, were preliminary steps to be taken toward a group migration that later was to be served by the group's own national church.

There are two versions of the beginnings of Norwegian immigration to America in the nineteenth century. One version is found in one of the very earliest sources of Norwegian American history, namely, Ole Rynning's *True Account of America for the Information and Help of Peasant and Commoner. Written by a Norwegian who arrived there in the month of June,* 1837.[12] Another version, supplementing this first one, was published by Barthinius L. Wick in *The Friend* in 1894. The latter gives a full background for the emigration, whereas Rynning (and with him Rev. J. W. Dietrichson, 1846, Prof. R. B. Anderson, 1896, and others) simply begins with Cleng's visit to America without giving any clue as to where he got the idea that America was worth investigating. Since there is no conflict between these versions, we shall make use of them both in the hope that our narrative will be enriched thereby.

We have spoken of the war between Denmark-Norway and England. In 1807 every able-bodied Norseman was drafted to fight the English and the Swedes. Among those drafted were Elias Tastad, Enoch Enochsen, Lars Larson, and others from Stavanger. By the fortunes of war, these were captured and imprisoned on miserable English prison ships outside of London. The Quakers, always the friends of the downtrodden, visited them in prison, distributed a Danish translation of Barclay's *Apology* among them, and sent missionaries to preach for them, with the result that the above-mentioned men were converted to the Quaker faith. One of the Quaker preachers was a French nobleman, Stephen Grellet by name, who had spent twelve years in America. When peace again was restored and the prisoners were liberated in 1814, Lars Larson remained a year in London in the employ of the family of William Allen, a noted Quaker and philanthropist. After thus making very valuable connections among the Quakers, and being firmly established in the Quaker faith, Larson returned to his native city, Stavanger, to propagate his new-found faith among his townsmen.[13]

Stavanger seemed ready for anything at this time, as the city was fairly seething with a religious dissent which bordered very closely upon an open religious revolt. Just where to lodge the blame

[11] Torstein Jahr, "Nordmänd in Nieuwnederland," in *Symra* (Decorah, Iowa), V. 65 ff. See also similar article by same author in *Symra,* IX, 9 ff.

[12] This work, published at Christiania, 1838, has been translated by Theo. C. Blegen and published in *Minnesota History Bulletin,* November, 1917.

[13] For a detailed account of these Norwegian Quakers see Henry J. Cadbury, "The Norwegian Quakers of 1825," in *The Harvard Theological Review,* October, 1925, 293 ff. See also George Richardson, *The Rise and Progress of the Society of Friends in Norway,* London, 1849.

for this cannot so easily be decided at this distance; it is a safe guess, however, that all parties to the open friction were somewhat to blame. There was undoubtedly in the city some of the extreme fanaticism which was left as dregs from the high-strung Herrnhutism of a former generation. While these elements preserved only the memory of the measures of suppression visited upon their forbears, they were easily fired to extreme action at the least sign of interference from the official classes. In a seedbed of this kind, Hauge's message and subsequent fate would stir to life dormant forces that neither Hauge nor his successor, John Haugvaldstad, could control. Added to this is the mercurial temperament of people in this commercial center, where ideas easily strike root, but usually are crowded out by new and contrary ideas long before they have time to bear proper fruit. Into this surge of ideas Haugeanism entered, only to be broken up and transformed into a number of variations ranging from staid, conservative Lutheranism to quite extreme fanaticism, with no other connection with Haugeanism than resentment at the treatment given Hauge by the official classes. In their turn, the official classes took hold of the matter in such a way that the charges of the extremists were justified. The clerical class possibly did not fully realize the strength of these dissenting groups; or, if they did, they were too bureaucratic to wish to relinquish any of their prerogatives without giving battle. Back of the clergy stood such harsh and aristocratic officials as, for instance, Captain Dietrichson, father of the Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson. On the one hand, then, we have excitable and aggressive anti-official elements; on the other, an official element which is willing and ready to assert all the prerogatives inherited from centuries of unlimited bureaucratic officialism. While in a general way it was Haugeanism that was pitted against officialism, Haugeanism really became merely a generic term covering practically every form of dissent and revolt. Truly, Stavanger might have seemed prepared for anything.

But Quakerism was a little too advanced for even the Stavangerings. The extremists, who labored in the name of Hauge and Haugvaldstad, did indeed prepare the way for Quakerism, but stopped far short of the position taken by the Quakers. The Quaker writer, Barthinius L. Wick, connects the Haugean and Quaker movements, although he admits that the Quaker doctrine

> sounded very strange to the people and dangerous to the officials. . . . The Friends [he continues] were much bolder than even these men [Hauge and Haugvaldstad]. They discarded water baptism, accepted no Lord's Supper, refused to take an oath, and objected to military service imposed by law upon every able-bodied Norseman. No wonder that priest and high official raised an outcry against such people, declaring them to be dangerous to the country.[14]

The Quakers probably were not at first given a great deal of attention except in their own narrow circles. At any rate, they were

[14] *The Friend*, 1894, 259 ff.

not prevented from organizing a "society" at Stavanger in 1816. Wick says (*ibid.*):

> There were three classes of persons that joined—first, and I trust, the greater part, were those who were convinced and believed in the views they accepted; second, those who were not so much in favor of all Quaker views, but were against the Lutheran Church, and as there was no other, they became Friends. This can be substantiated by the fact that, when the Methodists and the Baptists began their work in Norway, many of these people went over to those denominations. A third class was the poor who hoped for and were [*sic*] helped by the society. There are perhaps many today in Norway who were not Friends if it were not for the pecuniary assistance derived.

The Quakers in Norway were not to escape the inconveniences that they met in a much more severe form in other countries at this time. It is, however, a moot question just how much persecution the Quakers suffered in Norway before 1825. Prof. R. B. Anderson in his excellent book, *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration,* makes the emigrants of 1825 a "Mayflower" party which fled from religious persecution in Norway.[15] On the other hand, Prof. O. N. Nelson maintains that

> there is no authentic record to show that a single man, woman, or child of the fifty-two persons who emigrated in 1825, ever came in conflict with the laws of Norway on account of their religion. The only Quaker in the Stavanger district who suffered for his belief, prior to 1826, was Elias Tastad, and he did not emigrate. The main hardships of the Norwegian Friends befell them from 1830 to 1845. At the latter date religious freedom was virtually established in the kingdom.[16]

While the Stavangerings were scandalized in 1816 when Knud Halvorsen took Anna Olsdatter in marriage according to the Quaker custom of merely grasping each other's hands,[17] there is no indication that the bridal couple suffered any persecution. Nor is there any indication that the government interfered when the Quakers established their "society" at Stavanger in 1816. On the contrary, when Elias Tastad, the Quaker leader in Stavanger, requested in 1823 that eleven Quakers be granted free exercise of their religion, N. Krogh forwarded the request to the Department of Church and Education with the remark that, though difficulties might arise in case many should ask exemption from military service, he saw no reason for denying this request inasmuch as the petitioners were

[15] R. B. Anderson, *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration,* 45-131.
[16] O. N. Nelson, *History of the Scandinavians and Successful Scandinavians in the United States* (1901), I, 133.
[17] Gunnar Malmin, "Norsk Landnam i U. S.," III, in *Decorah Posten,* November 28, 1924.

"industrious and diligent" in their vocations.[18] Indeed, a government commission of 1844 deplores that any intolerance had been shown twenty years earlier—if such were the case. It reads:

> In the meantime, it seems worthy of our best attention, that the first emigration twenty years ago . . . should have been brought about by any show of intolerance over against the Quakers. In that case, it seems highly deplorable that the principles of universal religious freedom for all Christian sects of religion were not more plainly enunciated in paragraph two of our Constitution, or later established through legislation.[19]

From this it appears that, if the local officers of the law and the pastors resorted to harsh measures, it was not with the sanction of the government.

But there is a persecution that is worse than that of clergy and government officials, namely, the persecution of public opinion. In spite of the prevalent religious dissension, Norway—and also Stavanger—was solidly Lutheran. The Quakers were regarded as quite unnecessary, as breakers of the laws of good order and propriety, and as a peculiar lot—which latter they tried to be in accordance with their conception of the biblical assertion that they should be a "peculiar" people. This public antipathy is best reflected in the slow progress Quakerism made in spite of the relatively favorable conditions for Quaker work at Stavanger.

In 1818 Stephen Grellet and William Allen came to Stavanger to aid the work by organizing meetings, by having Quaker literature translated and by refuting false charges. Grellet also wrote the French king requesting that he use his influence with his (the king's) relative, the ruler of Sweden and Norway, to insure lenient treatment for the Quakers in Norway. Seeing the extreme poverty of the Quaker converts, Grellet advised the Norwegians to emigrate. Wick says: "Grellet seeing, also, the extreme poverty of the people, and knowing so well about America from his extensive travels in that country, told them that America offered many advantages, a better future as to prosperity, free exercise of religion and no military duties imposed. It was then that Grellet first broached the idea of America to the Norse peasants." This suggestion seems almost absurd when we consider the condition of those to whom it was made. On the other hand, even impoverished Viking blood tingles at fantastic schemes of this kind, and probably only the fact that they intended to take women and children along prompted these intrepid spirits to take the precaution to send two men, Cleng Peerson[20] and Knud Olson Eide, to investigate whether or not it would

[18] Malmin, *op. cit.*, II, in *Decorah Posten,* November 21, 1924.

[19] *Ibid.,* January 2, 1924.

[20] For spelling *Cleng* instead of *Kleng* Peerson see Theo. C. Blegen, "Cleng Peerson and Norwegian Immigration" in *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* March, 1921, 305, note 11.

be worth while going to that country. Thus was called upon the scene a man who was to play a strange rôle in American colonization—Cleng Peerson. His companion, Eide, must have died in New York; hence to Cleng Peerson alone goes the honor of being the pioneer in the great Norwegian migration to America in the nineteenth century.

Born on the farm Hesthammer in Stavanger Amt, or district, Norway, May 17, 1782, Cleng quite early came into contact with the dissenter groups in and around Stavanger.[21] He claimed intimate acquaintanceship with the Quaker leader, Elias Tastad, and it was his connection with the Quakers that prompted him to devote his energies to the task of colonization on a very large scale. For this he was particularly well fitted. Gifted with an easy flow of speech in which fact and fable were woven into an irresistible chain of persuasion—not argument—he stirred whole neighborhoods to a frenzy for emigration. Once these people had entrusted their lives and limbs to his care, he showed remarkable ability and scrupulous honesty in managing their affairs. At times this called for great personal sacrifice; but since he was practically devoid of even legitimate self-interest in managing his own affairs, he sacrificed when he should rightly have reserved something for himself. Thus he owned and disposed of very large tracts of land without receiving anything at all in return for his holdings except the good will of those he helped. Getting a deed to the lands involved walking several hundred miles, and at the end of the journey he had to display some very keen business acumen. This service Peerson performed gratuitously for thousands of settlers. In search of new lands for his countrymen, Peerson walked the entire distance from Kendall, New York, to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1833. Near here under an oak tree in La Salle County, Illinois, the weary Cleng fell asleep, it is said, and dreamt:

> and in his dream he saw the wild prairie changed into a cultivated region, teeming with all kinds of grain and fruit most beautiful to behold; that splendid houses and barns stood all over the land, occupied by a rich, prosperous, and happy people. Alongside the fields of waving grain large herds of cattle were feeding. Cleng interpreted this as a vision and as a token from Almighty God that his countrymen should come there and settle.[22]

So they did. Not only that, but they settled in various other midwestern states whither Cleng led them. He even went to Texas and led a colony down there. In this latter state he chose to live his last years. At his death on December 16, 1865, he was buried in

[21] Biographies of Cleng Peerson are: Blegen, *op. cit.;* virtual reprint of same in *North Star,* May-June, 1921, 196; R. B. Anderson, *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration,* 54 ff., 179 ff.; R. B. Anderson, *Cleng Peerson og Sluppen Restaurationen* (Chicago, 1925).

[22] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.,* 172.

the Lutheran cemetery at Norse, Texas. Thus ended a life given wholly and unstintedly to the cause of Norwegian immigration to America.

Cleng Peerson (Hesthammer) was not consciously undertaking to transfer *Norwegian Lutheranism* to America. Far from it. In as far as he was anything else than a pronounced freethinker, he was possibly a Quaker, but certainly not a Lutheran.[23] And yet this man must be regarded as the pioneer of the Norwegian immigration to America in the nineteenth century, and as such has had an important share in transplanting the Norwegian Lutheran Church to American soil.

As already stated, Cleng Peerson and Knud Olson Eide were sent to America by the Stavanger Quakers to verify Grellet's statements.[24] These men wrote home, but it was not until after Peerson's return to Norway in 1824 that definite steps to emigrate were taken. Six heads of families in 1825 bought an old sloop of forty-five tons called *Restaurationen* (The Restoration) and loaded it with iron and brandy. With this cargo and fifty-two persons on board, the little sloop set sail on July 4, 1825, under command of Lars Olson Helland [25] as captain of the ship, and with Lars Larson (i Jeilane) as leader of the party.

They sailed into the English Channel and stopped in the harbor of Lisett, where they began to sell liquor in violation of the English laws and had to abandon their provisioning and get away as fast as possible to avoid arrest. Due to poor seamanship and adverse winds, they went far out of their course, but after considerable cruising found their way into the harbor of Funchal, Madeira Islands. Here they saw a cask of wine floating in the harbor, and Lars Larson, their leader, for the moment forgot his Quaker tenets and joyfully hoisted the cask on board. They were so engrossed in (or otherwise affected by) these new-found spirits that they did not hoist flag. Thinking it was a deserted pest ship that had drifted into the harbor, the officials at the fort were already having the guns trained on them when an officer from a nearby ship cried out to them to fly their colors. After a dizzy search they found a flag and were thus saved.

At Funchal they were treated with sympathy and courtesy. They left there July 31 and arrived in New York on October 10, the trip from Norway consuming fourteen weeks. In the course of this long voyage the leader's wife, Mrs. Larson, had given birth to a daughter, making the number of persons on board fifty-three when they arrived in New York. Since it was in violation of American law to carry such a large cargo on such a small boat, the captain

[23] *Ibid.*, 192.

[24] From now on the various accounts agree in essentials. We shall therefore follow R. B. Anderson's account in *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration.*

[25] Malmin, "Norsk Landnam i U. S.," II, in *Decorah Posten,* November 21, 1924.

was arrested and detained for a short time. Cleng Peerson, who had come to America in another boat, succeeded in getting influential Quakers to intercede for the luckless captain, with the result that he was released without paying any fine.

Their successful, though rash, enterprise aroused a great deal of interest in New York.[26] The *New York Daily Advertiser* for Wednesday, October 12, 1825, carried an editorial describing these modern Vikings and their frail craft as "A Novel Sight." Well might these rash sailors attract attention; for even during the World War the crossing of the Atlantic by the expertly sailed, motor-driven, forty-five-ton subchasers was regarded as an epoch in navigation; how much more, then, should not the passage of this lone, frail, overloaded, and badly sailed sloop of 1825!

After having disposed of the boat and its cargo, the sloopers, as they are called, were led by Cleng Peerson to Kendall, now in Orleans County, New York. Whatever color had brightened their view of American prospects, it paled before the grim realities confronting them as strangers in a strange land. They were homesick and ill in body and in mind; their location was badly chosen; and they soon found that, though some of them were familiar with the language, financial advancement in America was extremely slow for the immigrant who was unfamiliar with American conditions. As a result of the general discontent, the settlers sent such discouraging reports back to Norway that others did not follow immediately in their wake. We shall, therefore, have ample opportunity to pause and examine this group a little more closely in regard to their possible contribution to the transplanting of the Norwegian Lutheran Church to America. Their isolated position in history also demands this of us.

We should reasonably expect the sloopers to be hostile to the Lutherans; for if it be true that they had suffered for their faith in Norway and, Pilgrim-like, were escaping from persecution, we should certainly expect these staunch and tried Quakers to continue in their zeal also in America. That the motives for emigration were mixed an examination of their religious history will show. Prof. Anderson, who has given the matter much enthusiastic study, says of their religious condition:

> Many of those who came in the sloop and some of those who came later were Quakers. Instead of organizing themselves separately they naturally attached themselves to American Quaker societies and worshiped with them. This I know was the case with Lars Larson (i Jeilane) in Rochester, with Ingebret Larson Narvig in Michigan, and with the Rossadals and Olsons in the Fox River settlement. Some of the early Norwegian immigrants had no profound religious convictions and might properly be called agnostics. I have myself known a considerable number both of the sloopers and of those who came in 1836 and in 1837, who were not only

[26] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.*, 70 ff.

> destitute of religious convictions, but who seemed utterly to despise, and were fond of ridiculing, ministers, churches, the Bible and religious people. . . . It seems that some of these agnostics had acquired their hostility to the Church and to religion before they emigrated from Norway. They merely became louder and more outspoken in their ridicule and denunciations after they got their feet on the free soil of America. As in the days of rationalism, so now those who were religiously inclined held devotional exercises at home.[27]

We have above sufficiently explained why the immigrants brought this antipathy with them to America.[28]

With Larson, Narvig, Rossadals, and Olsons accounted for, we still have some others. One of the sloopers, a Haugean, Ole Olson (Hetletvedt), who was later to play a part in the religious history of Illinois,[29] preached in the Kendall settlement for a while. From that one might conclude that he was not the only devout Haugean in the party. He was later aided by Björn Hatlestad, who came to Kendall in 1836. These men preached in the settlement and otherwise attempted to minister to the spiritual needs of the people. Though these were Haugeans, it seems that only the best of feeling existed between them and the Quakers. Since very little was done to keep the group together in matters of religion, it was soon badly split up into numerous religious parties. One of the sloopers, Mr. H. Harwick, wrote in 1871: "So far as religion is concerned we have many churches and many ministers and various denominations, and some go to church, while others stay at home." [30] It took them some time to get used to these various churches, he says, but little by little they were reconciled to them, and it made very little difference so long as they were built on the same foundation, Jesus Christ.

This was rather broad denominationalism, but it was none too narrowly defined if it should include the church affiliations in the Kendall settlement. Harwick's sister, Caroline, married another slooper, Gudmund Haugaas, who became a high-priest of the order of Melchizedek in the church of the Latter Day Saints in La Salle County, Illinois. The slooper, Sarah Nelson Hersdal, married Canute Peterson Marsett, who became bishop at Ephraim, Utah, and one of the seventy desciples of the Mormon sect. Of the other sloopers there does not seem to be any religious record, unless one should include Cleng Peerson in the party on the grounds that he was very closely connected with them, though he did not cross the ocean in the sloop. Peerson's religious views are described by Ole Canuteson of Waco, Texas, who knew him from 1850 until his death in 1865:

> He [Peerson] was the most pronounced freethinker I have ever known. I remember his having an old Danish freethinking book

[27] *Ibid.*, 396. [28] See Chapter I. [29] See below, 38.
[30] In the newspaper, *Fädrelandet og Emigranten* (La Crosse, Wis.), February 9, 1871. Quoted by R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.*

translated from the German. He believed little or nothing of the Bible, especially the supernatural part thereof. Whether he at any time had belonged to the Quakers I cannot say positively, but time and again I heard him talk about them as models in religious and temporal matters, and I heard him talk about getting assistance, aid and comfort from Elias Tastad of Stavanger, Norway, he being their leader in that city.[31]

About all we can say for the sloopers in the Kendall settlement, then, is that they, with the exception of Ole Olson (Hetletvedt), made no direct and positive contribution to Lutheran church life as such. But their indirect contribution was great. Lars Larson, the staunch and lovable Quaker leader of the sloop party, built a large house in Rochester and his home was the exemplification of the "friendly" spirit that he professed. Hundreds of subsequent immigrants stopped at his home and he helped them in every possible way, and then sent them to the middle-western settlements. By directing the immigration to a few compact settlements, he made possible the beginnings of organized church work in later times. When Larson lost his life, falling from a canal boat while on his way to New York, November 13, 1845,[32] Norwegian American Lutheranism lost one of its very great benefactors.

When the main stream of Norwegian immigration came, it went to the Middle West; hence the Kendall settlement, which withal dwindled in size, lost its importance as a Norwegian center and became chiefly a stopping-place for these westward-bound settlers. We can, therefore, dismiss the sloopers with two different characterizations. After they had been in America seventy-five years, Prof. O. N. Nelson writes of them: "Considered as a unit, the immigrants of 1825 have practically exercised no influence; as individuals, they and their offspring have, no doubt, been peaceful citizens and desirable subjects; but apparently hardly any of them have possessed those marked characteristics of push and energy so common to the Norwegians in the nineteenth century." [33] Quite different is Dr. O. M. Norlie's estimate of them at the centennial of their immigration. He says of the five hundred that he has traced:

> They are all at work and are found in every representative occupation. About two-thirds of them are on the farm. They are literate, most of them trained exclusively in the public schools. A number of them have college and professional degrees. . . . Nearly one-half of them are known to belong to some Christian church—15% Lutheran, 1% Catholic, 12% Methodist, 6% Congregationalist, 5% Baptist, 2% Adventist, 1% Episcopalian, 1% Campbellite, 2% Quaker.[34]

They are evidently average Norwegian Americans—neither better nor worse.

[31] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.*, 192. [32] *Ibid.*, 65 ff.
[33] O. N. Nelson, *History of the Scandinavians in the U. S.*, 134, litera o.
[34] O. M. Norlie, *History of the Norwegian People in America*, 127.

We shall merely mention in passing an incident that had a decisive effect on the Kendall settlement's future. Cleng Peerson, the restless prospector, and Ingebret Larson Narvig, a Quaker, who had come from Stavanger via Boston to Kendall in 1831, set out on foot in 1833 to explore the West. Narvig stopped in Michigan, but the persistent Cleng walked on to Chicago, then a mere village, up to Milwaukee, an outpost of three houses, and then back again to Illinois. In La Salle County he is supposed to have had his dream of the wild prairies changed into one of a cultivated region, with fields of grain and orchards bearing fruits, with houses and barns and cattle and a rich, prosperous, and happy people. Whether awake or asleep, it indeed required imagination in those days to visualize this on the wild prairies of Illinois.

At any rate, the prospect was one to conjure with, especially when presented by such a master as Cleng Peerson. At his return to Kendall, New York, he immediately began to paint in rosy colors the lands to the west, with the result that in 1834 and 1835 many of the Kendall settlers moved to Illinois and founded the second Norwegian settlement in America at Mission, La Salle County, Illinois. This so-called Fox River settlement soon became the real center of Norwegian immigration to America, though it, in turn, soon had to yield to other settlements in point of importance. There was now an immigrant station in the West as well as in the East. This, of course, made for concentration of the Norwegian immigration in certain sections, making separate church work among the immigrants possible. Another result is that the reports sent back to Norway now took on a very different color, the pessimistic reports of the Kendallites being quite overshadowed by the reports from the Westerners.

From 1825 to 1836 very few immigrants came over, possibly because the Kendall settlers had gotten such an unfavorable impression of America. Some few came, however, going by way of Gothenborg (Sweden), Hamburg, and Havre. Thus in 1829 Gundmund Sandsberg, a staunch Lutheran, came over, and his letters created some interest among his relatives in Norway, where the times were exceedingly hard. Gjert Gregoriussen Hovland came to America in 1831 and, being fortunate enough to clear five hundred dollars in four years on a land deal, he wrote a glowing account back to Norway about the conditions here, describing the liberal American laws, the equality and liberty they guarantee, and contrasting these great boons with the extortions of the official aristocracy in Norway. There was no law of God, he said, to prevent people from settling in whatever part of the world they wished; so if the Norwegians were at all able, they should come to America.

When we remember what had been brewing in the minds of the Norwegian *bönder,* particularly from 1833 to 1836, we can easily understand the tremendous effect these letters of 1835 had. They were transcribed a thousand times and were discussed wherever men

met. In 1835 the slooper, Knud Anderson Slogvig, returned to Norway, and it is said that he could not have aroused more interest if he had come from the moon. Here was a man from the Western Goshen, and men traveled over a hundred miles to see this marvelous person and to hear his wonderful story. The "America fever" became irrepressible, and the stories about being sold to the Turks as slaves, about the fearful diseases of the new land, and the solemn remonstrance by the clergy were all in vain.[35]

Two ships, *Norden* (The North) and *Den norske klippe* (The Norwegian Rock) were, accordingly, fitted out in Stavanger, and two hundred emigrants set sail in 1836 for the Fox River settlement in La Salle county, Illinois. In 1837 two more ships, *Ægir* and *Enigheden* (The Unity), set sail from Bergen and Stavanger, respectively, with another two hundred passengers bound for the same place. The leader of the party of 1836 was Björn Anderson; the leader of the party of 1837 was Student Ole Rynning, about whom we shall hear more presently. At present we might only remark that he and the party of 1837 were dissuaded from going to Fox River, though some of this party later found their way thither. Others from Stavanger and elsewhere soon came over. Most notable of these early arrivals is Elling Eielsen (Sunve), who arrived in Fox River in 1839.

As we have taken pains to indicate, the early Fox River settlement was composed almost altogether of Stavangerings. The early settlers at Fox River who came from Kendall, New York, were, of course, from Stavanger; the two ships that came over in 1836 were from Stavanger; so was *Enigheden* which came over in 1837. The early Fox River settlement, therefore, was really a second Stavanger, and its religious temper reflected an extreme type of religious revolt, unstable Haugeans, and a more moderate Haugeanism. The former elements were here free to take their own natural courses, the one turning its back upon religion entirely, the other joining any sect whatever so long as it was not Lutheran. Fortunately, the third element retained its Lutheran connections, though it, too, was of a somewhat nonconformist type.

That the religious conditions were far from ideal at Fox River is freely admitted by such an authority as Prof. R. B. Anderson, who is himself a Stavangering, being the son of Björn Anderson, the leader of the party of 1836. There should be no question, therefore, in regard to his fairness in this matter. Here are the conditions as he found them:

> Some of the early Norwegian immigrants had no profound religious convictions, and might properly be called agnostics. I have myself known a considerable number both of the sloopers and of those who came in 1836 and in 1837, who were not only destitute of religious convictions, but who seemed utterly to despise and were

[35] *Billed-Magazin*, Svein Nilsson (ed.), I, 154 ff.

> fond of ridiculing ministers, churches, the Bible and religious people. . . . It seems that some of these agnostics had acquired their hostility to the church and to religion before they emigrated from Norway. They merely became louder and more outspoken in their ridicule and denunciations after they got their feet on the free soil of America.[36]

This statement, which has already been quoted above in passing, bears repetition, as it vividly portrays a certain condition that was not restricted to the Stavangerings alone, but which, in their case, is somewhat characteristic. Just why a certain number should be agnostic need not worry us at this time. That undesirable elements attached themselves to the Haugeans and Quakers is easily understood. In the bitter struggle for power in Norway[37] the Haugeans (and, in Stavanger, also the Quakers), under the astute leadership of the Stavanger *bonde,* Ole Gabriel Ueland, championed the cause of the lower classes against the clergy and the office-holding classes. In this struggle for social and political power every shade of opposition to the clergy and the church enlisted under the banner of the highly religious and thoroughly confessional Haugeans. How long this negative ideal could hold these elements together in America where there were neither State Church pastors nor a State Church is, of course, another matter. In the absence of the common foe every man's hand was against every other man, with the result that Quakerism as well as Haugeanism lost all control over this element. This group consequently broke up into a number of fragments, destroying altogether every prospect for concerted action along Norwegian national lines. Worse still, these elements now went their way into agnosticism, denouncing everything that pertained to religion as they went. They had perhaps never really belonged to the State Church except in a very nominal way; they had embraced Haugeanism or Quakerism only in a very negative way; now they were lost to all religion. As they went out into the night of agnosticism, they sowed the tares of hatred and suspicion. And these were difficult weeds to eradicate at Fox River, this group representing apostasy in its extremest form.

Besides these agnostics there was a second class, namely, a group of unstable Haugeans. Possibly the great majority of the settlers were church people, some of whom had actually suffered in some way for their faith. These came to America either as Quakers or Haugean Lutherans, since these were the only possible alignments for this group in Norway at that time. But if they had had no choice in Norway, they were given ample opportunity to choose at Fox River, where the sects made great inroads among the unorganized immigrants. Prof. Anderson also describes this side of the religious life of the community. "In the Fox River settlement all was chaos and confusion during the early days of the colony. Some of

[36] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.,* 396. [37] See above, Chapter I.

the Norwegians there were Quakers, others Baptists, others Presbyterians, others Methodists, others Lutherans, others Mormons, and some were freethinkers, all in inextricable disorder." [38]

Measured by the test of Lutheran loyalty, which is the test we must apply to other immigrated Norwegians, these Fox River settlers make a bad showing indeed. Even if we recognize the dissent at Stavanger and include also Quaker loyalty as a test, the results are equally unsatisfactory. These people came to America either as Lutherans or as Quakers; if Quakers, they had been persecuted by public opinion—by this time also by governmental interference—hence must be regarded as martyrs. But there was nothing of the steadfast devotion of the martyr manifested in the widespread defection of the early Fox River settlers to all sorts of sects. One reason for their speedy defection is, of course, the loose adherence of some of the dissenters to Haugeanism or Quakerism. Hatred of the State Church and its clergy, the bond of union in Norway, was not sufficient to bind them either to Haugeanism or Quakerism in America, where they were not confronted by either of these institutions. Then there was the inherent weakness of Haugeanism, as the dissenters understood this movement; Haugeanism to them was a movement which legitimately sought to depose the State Church clergy as religious leaders. The dissenters had been as thoroughly indoctrinated as the other early immigrants, and, judged as lay members of the established church, were quite capable and intelligent. But when they made a bid to assume the spiritual leadership of the church, they at once felt the disparity which existed between themselves and the State-Church clergy, especially in the popular mind. In attempting to do away with this disparity, they indiscriminately attacked the clergy and their admittedly Lutheran views, thereby undermining the very foundations of Lutheran unity, as "pure doctrine" is the only universal bond of union in the Lutheran Church. With the bond of union practically destroyed, this dissenting element indiscriminately followed almost every will-o'-the-wisp so long as it could show some glimmer of "piety" and "spiritual life."

As already stated, the Fox River settlers started out as either Haugean Lutherans or as Quakers. With the lay preachers in the lead, the Fox Riverites immediately began to order their religious affairs either because they thought that an emergency existed, or because they felt that in this free land they could put into effect exactly what some of their more extreme fellow-Haugeans in Norway were struggling for, namely, have laymen perform practically every pastoral function. At any rate, they elected Jörgen Pederson as their religious leader, expecting, possibly, that he should seek regular ordination. But Jörgen Pederson discovered that the Latter Day Saints also were pious people, consequently he joined them. The Haugeans lost another sturdy lay leader when Ole Heier went the

[38] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.*, 398.

way of Jörgen Pederson, becoming first an elder, then a bishop, in the Mormon sect. Heier refused to go to Utah, so joined another group of pious folk, the Close Communion Baptists, probably not realizing that there was any difference between these and the Mormons. Hans Balder, another Haugean layman, joined the Baptists, who ordained him and used him as a proselyter. At Koshkonong in 1841 appeared John Smith, a Swede, who claimed to be a Lutheran, a minister of the Gospel, and a medical doctor. He turned out to be a Baptist and, though he was sent to proselyte and thus was a minister in a way, he certainly was not a Lutheran and very little of a doctor. He soon left for Chicago. A layman, Ole Hansen, also called Ole "Konsulen," joined the Methodists and preached to his countrymen. His headquarters were at Rock Prairie and Highland, Wisconsin.

These, then, were some of the leaders of the unstable Haugeans at Fox River. We wonder, on the one hand, at their speedy defection from the Lutheran Church, and, on the other, at their extreme zeal in embracing what they so imperfectly understood. So long as there was "life," spiritual life, they seemed satisfied and apparently asked no further questions. The proselyting sects naturally were glad to enlist these converts to their ranks, since none of their more seasoned men understood the Norwegian language. Whatever else these Norwegian sectarians preached, they certainly lost no occasion to inflame the minds of the malcontents against the "State Church pastors," whose arrival in America they possibly were anticipating. How this fell on fertile soil cannot be stressed too much. In their defense it must be observed that possibly they felt that the proper thing to do in America was to line up with the "Americans" in church work as well as in every other way.

Somewhat apart stands the Swede, G. Unonius, in his efforts to attract the Norwegians into the Episcopalian fold, whither he himself had gone. While he was still an unordained theological student in an Episcopalian Seminary, he was as zealous as any convert could be on the question of "orders." His field was so large that he could not devote much attention to the Fox River settlement, but his attack on the self-constituted preachers who very frequently came through the settlement may have had its sobering effect. There were undoubtedly many pious, churchly people who were disgusted with the ignorant rantings of some of these lay clerics, and welcomed an orderly church service. Strategic as Unonius's position might seem, it had the great weakness that the greatest appeal he could make was to the churchliness they were accustomed to from Norway. But by so doing, he was paving the way for the Norwegian clergy. In this weird and motley collection of lay preachers, this student of theology stands out as a purposeful youth who served the church he had no thought of serving.

In reviewing the religious conditions at Fox River as thus far presented, we find that the agnostics, Quakers, and certain Hau-

geans went to extremes. We have also tried to show why it was natural for them to go to extremes: the restraints under which they had lived in Norway were suddenly removed and they were free to try out their most radical ideas in regard to the sufficiency of the lay preachers. While it is not our business to accuse or excuse, we realize that, feeling the way they did, these elements could not have acted much differently. That this course of action, if persisted in, would have entirely disrupted Norwegian Lutheranism is another matter. Nor should we forget to call the bureaucratic Norwegian clergy and autocratic office-holding class to account for their great share in bringing about by undue repression a situation like the one described at Fox River. After this period of extreme reaction, the saner elements at Fox River were able to take hold and bring the religious forces back into a more balanced frame of mind.

During all this time Lutheranism had had some adherents at Fox River who were made of sterner stuff than the unstable Haugeans mentioned above; and it is gratifying to note that these, also, were for the most part Haugeans. We shall first take up what might be designated as the Fox River group of lay preachers, not because their activities were limited to Fox River, but because they represent in a stronger or milder form a view of the clergy which was most pronounced at Fox River. Over against these we shall place a group of lay preachers which, for the same reason, we shall call the Muskego group. The latter will be discussed later.

In this third major group, the more moderate Haugeans, were a few who did not break altogether with the church, though they refused to line up definitely with it. Perhaps Björn Anderson, the leader of the party of 1836, is a typical example of the more conservative members of this class. His son, Prof. Rasmus B. Anderson, says that Björn Anderson had married outside of his class and, on account of the sharp class distinctions, found it expedient to emigrate to America. Besides recounting his admirable qualities, Prof. Anderson describes his father as being a "born agitator and debater"; as being given to "sarcastic criticisms of Norwegian laws and of the office-holding class"; and that "while he did not formally join the Quaker society he was in close sympathy with the Friends, and he always said that if he ever joined a church, it would be that of the Quakers." [39] While Björn Anderson remained at the Fox River settlement only four years, he undoubtedly entered heart and soul into its independent ways. There was certainly to be no domination either by the church or its pastors at Fox River; that much was settled with or without Björn Anderson's aid, as the case might be. For Björn Anderson it must be said that he later sent his sons to Luther College and his daughter married a Lutheran pastor.

Then there is the small but staunch group of moderate Haugeans who nobly held the ground for Lutheranism until relieved by Elling Eielsen. Ole Olson (Hetletvedt) was, as far as is known, the first

[39] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.*, 155.

to conduct Lutheran religious services among the Norwegians in America in the nineteenth century.[40] Born in Stavanger Amt, or district, of farmer folk, he came in the sloop and settled at Kendall. It is supposed that he conducted religious services in the Kendall settlement. He moved first to Niagara Falls, where he worked in a paper mill, and then to the Fox River settlement. There is no doubt that he was the first to gather the people there to hear the Word of God according to Haugean custom.[41] He was a mild-tempered, earnest Christian, who traveled extensively in all the Norwegian settlements in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa, and preached, carried on personal work, and acted as agent for an American Bible society. He had been a parochial school teacher in Norway; hence he must have had some education. His son, Col. Porter C. Olson, met a very heroic death at Franklin, Tennessee, November 30, 1864, while fighting for his country.[42] Ole Olson Hetletvedt "is said to have been the only one of that company [the sloopers] who remained true to the Lutheran faith." [43]

Another early lay preacher is Björn Hatlestad, who came to America in 1836. After a short stay in New York he moved to Illinois. While he was not a great preacher, he was sincere, and in his quiet way he was of some help to many of the early settlers. The layman, Peder Asbjörnson (Mehus), was, on the other hand, a zealous preacher and colporteur who was untiring in his labors. He was later ordained and became a pastor in the *Scandinavian Augustana Synod* (organized 1860) and in the *Conference* (organized in 1870). Other lay preachers of this period are Ole and Herman Osmundson Aaragerbö, Kleng Skaar, Aslag Aae, and John Brakestad. These men must be honored as those who kept the flickering flame of Lutheranism from being blown out by the many winds of doctrine in the early days at Fox River. But none of these was able to rout the sectarians and bring the settlers back into the Lutheran fold. This great task was reserved for Elling Eielsen, who appeared on the scene in 1839.

Elling Eielsen (Sunve) was born in Vos, near Bergen, Norway, September 19, 1804.[44] His father was a school teacher and had

[40] *Ibid.*, 408 ff. See above for his work at Kendall, New York.
[41] *Ibid.*, 112 ff.
[42] O. J. Hatlestad, *Historiske Meddelelser om den Norske Augustana Synode* (Decorah, Iowa, 1887), 24.
[43] K. O. Eittreim, "Hauge's Synod" in A. E. Strand, *A History of the Norwegians in Illinois*, 140.
[44] The most sympathetic biographies of this man are Chr. Brohaugh and I. Eisteinsen, *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed* (Chicago, 1883), and E. O. Mörstad, *Elling Eielsen og den "Evangelisk-lutherske Kirke" i Amerika*, (Minneapolis, 1917). Th. Bothne gives an interesting biography of him in his *Kort Udsigt over det Lutherske Kirkearbeide blandt Nordmändene i Amerika*, appended to Takla's edition of Heggtveit, *Illustreret Kirkehistoire*, 833. He has been variously estimated by such writers as J. A. Bergh in *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika* (Minneapolis, 1914), and H. Halvorson in *Synodens Festskrift* (Decorah, Iowa, 1903).

leanings toward Haugeanism. Elling was of a melancholy temperament and he says of himself that in his youth he had gone to certain excesses. Being recalled from his evil ways by the chance remark of a friend, he went through a period of spiritual depression in which he actually thought of committing suicide. He was saved from this fate by moving to Bergen in 1829, where he lived at the home of a certain Odland, a Haugean. By contact with this family and by a renewed study of Pontoppidan's large *Explanation* of Luther's *Catechism,* he gained peace in his soul. This intense and prolonged spiritual struggle was reflected in his preaching which was somewhat legalistic. This drab tone was possibly also due to a reaction against his whole former life and the conditions that seemed to have brought on his fall into sin.

He always felt that the pastors had not done their full duty by him in his plight. Life in the country districts was wild and uncultured. The quiet and sober everyday life of the *bönder* stood in glaring contrast to the excesses connected with their "social good times" at weddings, at the celebration of childbirth, and at funerals, when there was much drinking, many fist fights, and a general hilariousness. In the cities, conditions were as bad, if not worse. In Eielsen's youth it was true that

> the State Church pastors preached their sermons, instructed the confirmants, and administered the sacraments, but they did not go down to the people and try by direct intervention to raise them in moral and cultural respects. The other officials did still less, although they, too, were to be the servants of the people. The ministers were beyond comparison the best of the king's officials, but they were not of the people and they did not live *with* the people and *for* the people. They kept themselves far removed just as the ancient German counts in their fortified castles had done, and their words from the pulpit too often were above the heads of the congregation.[45]

Being a man who made no distinctions, Eielsen was thoroughly incensed at the negligence of the clergy; hence he railed at the "long-frocked" clergy until the habit became a mania with him. No matter where he spoke and what the local conditions were, he would quite invariably accuse the people of living "i dans og drik og sus og dus" (in dance and drunkenness, riot and revel), and the "long-frocked" clergy of sleeping the deep sleep of "dead" orthodoxy. Usually he was right. On the other hand, Eielsen seems to have been one of that large class of people whose hearts and minds at some crucial time in their lives receive a flood of new impulses, bringing them entirely up to the point of saturation; after that they seem incapable of revising their judgments, though conditions change greatly. Spiritual conditions in Norway did change a great deal after the foundation of the university in 1813, with the pious Ste-

[45] Quoted from Bothne, *op. cit.,* 833.

nersen and Hersleb as teachers, and Wexels as preacher to the theological students. Entirely oblivious to this fact, Eielsen continued his tirades against the clergy as clergymen were in his youth. In order to keep his sermon fresh, he moved from place to place, his campaign-like repetition of certain catch phrases and his extensive travels giving him a very wide influence indeed.

As might be expected, the clergy took up the gage of battle with Eielsen, though they were too wary to persecute him. This honor, as he regarded it, came to him in Denmark, where he was imprisoned, but soon released at the intercession of Prince Christian and Princess Caroline Amalia. Eielsen and his followers were human enough to take some pride in this incident.[46] But it was not unmixed blessing, as Eielsen was less inclined than ever to take orders from John Haugvaldstad and the other leaders of Haugeanism in Norway. In spite of Haugvaldstad's repeated warnings that Eielsen be prudent, Eielsen persisted in his rather aggressive ways of dealing with the clergy and the authorities. Finally it was with great difficulty that Eielsen was permitted to hold devotional meetings at "Bredtvedt," Hauge's homestead. Eielsen's blunt ways served as an invigorating force to Haugeanism in Norway; his emigration, however, was opportune, inasmuch as an inevitable break in the Haugean ranks in Norway was thereby averted.[47]

This man, then, came to the Fox River settlement in 1839 and took hold of the religious situation with characteristic vigor. Eielsen built himself a large log house, the "upstairs" of which served as his "meeting-house," this being the first of its kind among the Norwegian Lutherans in America. Elling fairly made the rafters ring with his fiery eloquence against the sects and, as a result, he drove practically all of them—excepting the Mormons—out of the settlement, and brought most of the wayward Fox River settlers back into the Lutheran Church.

Realizing that careful indoctrination was the only safeguard against the sects, Eielsen determined to procure textbooks for the instruction of the young. Anxious that no change should be made in the text of his beloved Pontoppidan's *Explanation,* Eielsen walked the whole distance from Rock County, Wisconsin, to New York City in search of a printer who had precisely the same kinds of types as those used in Eielsen's copy. Finally succeeding in his quest, he had an edition of Pontoppidan's *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed* (Truth unto Godliness) printed in 1842. This was the first Norwegian book to be printed in America.

Wonderful as Eielsen's work was, he succeeded only in part. He routed the sects at Fox River, but he unfortunately widened the gulf between laity and clergy, putting an almost indelible stamp of low-churchism upon the settlement.

[46] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *op. cit.,* 41 ff. See J. A. Bergh, *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika,* 13.

[47] Bergh, *op. cit.,* 13.

CHAPTER III

A NEW TYPE OF IMMIGRANT—ADVENT OF PASTORS

In contrast to the low-church, practically anti-clerical, Fox River settlers stands the great mass of immigration which was decidedly friendly toward the pastors and their work. This type was exemplified somewhat incompletely at Muskego, and to a very full degree at Koshkonong. Both of these centers reprsented a decided advance over the Fox River type, undoubtedly because they had had a different religious background in Norway. Over against the anti-clerical Stavangerings stand the Numedalians, Vossings, and Telemarkings, all of whom brought with them a profound respect for the clergy and their work. We shall now turn our attention to this new type of immigrant as it is found at Muskego.

In our narrative above we dismissed Ole Rynning and the party of 1837 with the bare statement that they were dissuaded from going to the Fox River settlement. This fateful decision, which was fraught with fearfully disastrous results to this party, did, nevertheless, have a vital bearing on future emigration to America, consequently also on Norwegian American Lutheranism.

While en route to Chicago, Ole Rynning's party was joined at Detroit by Ole and Ansten Nattestad, circumstances thus bringing together three men who jointly were to play a rôle of unparalleled importance in the promotion of Norwegian immigration. When Rynning's party came to Chicago, they were dissuaded from going to the Fox River settlement by some land agents who wished to sell them land at Beaver Creek, Iroquis County, about seventy-five miles south of Chicago.[1] Upon recommendation of four of their own number, who had been sent to investigate the matter, the party chose the Beaver Creek site and proceeded with their newly purchased oxen and wagons to this land of promise. But, alas, the land, which had been dry in late summer, became a lake in spring; besides this, the swampy land reeked with malaria, and practically the whole party, including Ole Rynning, died from this dread disease. The Nattestads and a few other survivors abandoned their precious holdings and fled for their lives. Mons Aadland, the last man to leave, was fortunate enough to exchange his land for a small herd of cattle.

In the course of these misfortunes, Ole Rynning stood out as a hero indeed. Born April 4, 1809, in Ringsaker, Norway, Ole's father, the Rev. Jens Rynning, had given his son a university edu-

[1] S. Nilsson in *Billed-Magazin*, 30.

cation with the idea of making a minister of him. But Ole thought otherwise, and when he was betrothed to a girl that his father did not regard as suitable for the minister's son, Ole took the matter into his own hands and determined to seek his own and his betrothed's fortunes in the New World. It was fortunate for the *Ægir* party that Ole undertook the trip, as he proved himself an able leader on several occasions.[2] With calm courage in the most distressing situations, and with unfailing patience with the fault-finding immigrants, he managed the affairs of the luckless colony in a masterful way.

On one of his exploring expeditions, undertaken in behalf of the settlers, Rynning trudged through the Beaver Creek marshes at a time when they were covered with a thin layer of ice. When he reached the colony, his feet were so frozen and lacerated that he was confined to his bed for a long time. In the course of this confinement, he improved his time by working on the manuscript of a small book that has now become of untold importance as a source of the history of this early period. When completed the booklet was given the ponderous title which in translation reads: *True Account of America for the Information and Help of Peasant and Commoner. Written by a Norwegian who arrived there in the month of June, 1837. Christiania, 1838.*[3]

As he wrote his interesting account of American conditions for the average man in Norway, Rynning consulted Ansten Nattestad and others, making this first Norwegian American book a truly representative work. Although Rynning recovered his health at this time, he fell sick again in the fall and died. Fortunately he had finished his book and entrusted its publication to Ansten Nattestad. Ansten left for Norway in the spring of 1838—that is, a few months before Rynning's death—with Rynning's and his brother Ole's manuscripts. In 1839 he succeeded in having published at Drammen, Norway, both Rynning's *True Account* and Ole Nattestad's *Beskrivelse over en Reise til Nordamerika* (Description of a Journey to North America).[4] Rynning, who gave his very life for the cause of immigration, thus raised above himself a monument more enduring than marble, as his deeds and his book stamp him as a worthy father of a large movement. He was the literary William Bradford and the kindly William Penn of the Norwegian Americans.

Shifting the scene from the pest-ridden American wilds to Norway, we see that Ansten Nattestad could hardly have aroused more

[2] Theo. C. Blegen's Introduction to his translation of Ole Rynning, "True Account," in *Minnesota History Bulletin,* November, 1917, 221 ff.

[3] This work has been translated by Theo. C. Blegen and published in *Minnesota History Bulletin,* II, 235.

[4] Ole Knudson Nattestad's *Description of a Journey to North America* is of great value as a source for this early history. It has been translated into English by R. B. Anderson and published in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History,* December, 1917.

interest if he had returned from a trip to the moon.[5] Since he had been consulted by Rynning in the course of the writing of *True Account,* Nattestad could verify by word of mouth all that had been said in the book. This made a profound impression; people traveled as much as twenty Norwegian miles (one hundred and forty English miles) to see and hear Ansten Nattestad, with the result that emigration became the topic of the day even in quite remote districts. So completely were men carried away by the idea of emigration that their frenzied interest in this matter has been aptly described as "the America fever." By the time this "epidemic" had spent its force, it had deprived Norway of nearly a million of her choicest citizens. Though no longer a "fever," it still takes its toll of the flower of the Norwegian citizenry.

Norwegian patriots could not remain inactive in the face of such a crisis. Literary men like Henrik Wergeland, Björnstjerne Björnson, and others poured forth their contemptuous wrath upon those who turned their backs upon the mother country. Wergeland angrily denounced emigration as an act of a dastardly treacherous nature.[6] The pastors, like Ole Rynning's father, warned the people against emigration. Rev. Jens Rynning "even preached from the pulpit and urged the people to be discreet, and described the hardships of the voyage and the cruelty of the American savage in the most forbidding colors."[7] Others circulated the weirdest stories about America, and about the dangers connected with crossing the ocean. Some reported that the captains of the vessels sold the emigrants as slaves to the Turks; others said that the ocean was infested with terrible sea-monsters which could gobble up a whole ship in one gulp. Even a worse fate than being thus swallowed alive awaited those who were shipwrecked by icebergs and captured by the savage Indians. There was apparently no limit to the materials that were pressed into the service of this desperate counter propaganda.

But it was all in vain. Ole Rynning's book and the many letters home satisfactorily answered all these prejudicial statements about America. In 1839, only one year after Ansten Nattestad returned to Norway, two large parties, one of a hundred from Numedal and one of forty from Tin, Telemarken, emigrated to America. The news of the sad fate of Ole Rynning and the Beaver Creek settlers dampened the ardor for emigration for a time. But after a lull during 1840 and 1841, emigration set in in full earnest and, except under extraordinary circumstances, has not abated to this day.

Settlements sprang up on all sides in Illinois and Wisconsin, and, later, in Iowa, Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Montana. Many of the

[5] S. Nilsson in *Billed-Magazin,* I, 7.

[6] See his poem in Th. Bothne, *Kort Udsigt* in Heggtveit, *Illustreret Kirkehistorie,* 816.

[7] S. Nilsson in *Billed-Magazin,* I, 45. Quoted by Theo. C. Blegen in his introduction to Ole Rynning, "True Account," in *Minnesota History Bulletin,* November, 1917.

early settlers went by way of the Fox River settlement and not so few settled there. Other settlements were founded in the following order: Indian Creek (Leland) and Chicago, Illinois, 1836; Beaver Creek, Wisconsin, 1837; Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin, 1838; Muskego and Rock Prairie, Wisconsin, and Rock Run, Illinois, 1839; Koshkonong, Wisconsin, 1840; Hamilton, Wisconsin, 1841; and Lisbon, Queen Ann, and Long Prairie, Illinois, at about the same time or a little later.[8] The compactness of these settlements made it possible later for the same pastor to serve several settlements. It is worth noticing that the bulk of this immigration came from Voss, Numedal, and Telemarken.

We have noted that the pastors in Norway opposed emigration on patriotic grounds; at this time we wish to add that they opposed it even more strenuously on religious grounds. The pastors felt that their parishioners would be exposed to some very real spiritual dangers in the new land, and their first impulse was to deal harshly with those who showed such a reckless disregard of their own spiritual welfare as to emigrate away from the church of their fathers. When they recognized that they were unable to stem the tide, the pastors accommodated themselves surprisingly well to the perplexing situation. While with the one hand they were still combating the wild schemes of emigration which threatened their flock with real hardships, with the other they began to build up in the prospective emigrant a protecting wall of sound Christianity that should be a tower of strength to him wherever he went. Besides admonishing the adults—sometimes with more zeal than wisdom, to be sure—the pastors instructed their confirmants with an impassioned fervor that should steel them for any trial of faith whether at home or abroad. Spiritual modesty and reticent self-respect have made men hesitate to bring these precious and sacred spiritual experiences before the irreverent tribunal of public opinion; hence the powerful effect of these admonitions has not received the attention it deserves. But the pastor saw the haunting specter of emigration in every bright eye in his confirmation class. What did it mean? What spiritual pitfalls were strewn in the paths of these dear young boys and girls? He wept at the thought of it. And at confirmation he sent them away with quivering words of admonition that burned like living fire in the young breasts. No Lutheran readily forgets his confirmation day, and if anyone had reason to remember it, these young people certainly had, as they instinctively felt that the future was charged with an evil as well as a good portent. And when with heavy feet they went to the pastor to get their certificate of good character, or "attest" as they called it, they again encountered the same heartfelt solicitude for their spiritual welfare. What happened in the last solemn hour of leave-taking is a closed book to outsiders; this much we know, however, that strong men have reverently testified to the power of that last farewell.

[8] J. A. Bergh, *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika*, 9.

It becomes almost superfluous to say that immigrants who were thus sent away carried with them only the most cherished memories of their pastor and his work. From this group one should hardly expect a deep-seated antipathy such as that found among the Stavangerings at Fox River. This was the churchly element, which, though it had all the faults and frailties of any other group, still had some qualifications for transplanting organized Norwegian Lutheranism to American soil. The leadership of this group first centered in the laymen at Muskego, but was later transferred to the congregations and pastor at Koshonong. We shall, therefore, go back and trace somewhat in detail the history of the Muskego settlement.

The Muskego settlement derives its name from the Muskego lake region. Two distinct attempts at settlement were made here. The first of these attempts was by a party of forty immigrants who came from Tin in Upper Telemarken in 1839, under the leadership of John Nelson Luraas. Not the remotest hint is given that religious persecution of any kind entered in as a cause for their emigration. John Nelson Luraas says that he had married the woman of his choice and, when he saw no prospect of supporting her in Norway, he emigrated. He surmised that the others in his party emigrated for financial reasons also.[9] When this party of Telemarkians came to Milwaukee, the story has it that they were dissuaded from proceeding to Fox River, their original destination, by some land agents who put up a very corpulent Mr. Walker as an example of what they might expect if they remained in Wisconsin Territory, contrasting him with a hollow-chested and coughing specimen from Illinois. The newcomers were impressed, but not convinced until, finally, the land agents, perceiving that the immigrants were sweltering in their heavy, woolen, home-spun clothes, told with great effect about the fearful summer heat in the neighboring state to the south![10] Whatever the merits of the story, the Telemarkians abandoned their plans of going to Fox River and bought land on the shores of Lake Muskego in Wisconsin for a dollar and twenty-five cents an acre. As at Beaver Creek, the marshes were dried up in summer and the long grass was a delight to the heart and eye of the immigrants; but when the fall rains came much of the region was flooded. With characteristic hardihood, the immigrants decided to remain and cultivate as much of their land as they could. Though the marshes were literally infested with ague, fever, and malaria, these settlers, reënforced by others from Norway, held out doggedly until cholera almost wiped out the settlement in 1849 and 1850. As a result of this calamity, this section of the Muskego Lake region fell into disrepute and was shunned by immigrants for years. The settlement was further so weakened by the departure of the original settlers that it became of no consequence until later,

[9] S. Nilsson in *Billed-Mogazin*, I, 7.
[10] *Ibid.*, I, 8.

when the stream of settlers from other parts took up land in this practically abandoned region.[11]

The other attempt at settlement referred to above was more successful. When Elling Eielsen came to Fox River in 1839, two other men of consequence were in his party, namely, Sören Bakke and Johannes Johannesen. These men came to Fox River with the rest of their party, but when they felt the cold wind sweep over the open prairies they set out in search of a more suitable place to settle. They came to what is now Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin, and bought a large tract of land on Wind Lake in what became the very heart of a series of settlements now known as the Muskego settlement. Into the sides of a large Indian mound where hundreds of redskins were buried, they burrowed a "dugout," which was destined to serve as a land-office, a general store, a center of culture, and a clearing-house for aid and information to the immigrants. Johannesen and Bakke immediately sent to their home city, Drammen, Norway, for Even Heg who, with a number of his townsmen, came over in 1840. Heg entered into partnership with the proprietors of the "dugout," and under the wise guidance of Heg and Johannesen many new enterprises were started. Heg built a large barn in which hundreds of Norwegians were temporarily quartered until they could find employment or land. Though some of these camped in his "hotel" an undue length of time and otherwise abused his hospitality, Heg was always both willing and resourceful in aiding them. Since the United States had no uniform currency system at the time, the "dugout" firm was called upon to straighten out many financial tangles. Of Heg and Johannesen it must be said that they had the undivided confidence and respect of the settlers far and wide. In passing, it might be noted that Heg's son, Hans, became the beloved colonel of the celebrated 15th Wisconsin regiment which did valiant service during the Civil War.

In spite of all this activity, the spiritual welfare of the people was by no means neglected. In the absence of regularly ordained pastors, Even Heg and his two associates, Sören Bakke and J. Johannesen, directed the spiritual affairs of the community. And they did it with marked success. Men of standing, with fervent and sound Haugean tendencies, these men made Heg's barn the center of religious activity. Besides preaching and doing some personal work, Even Heg performed so many emergency baptisms for people in even distant settlements that hundreds were inscribed in his baptismal records. But this wide activity never tempted the Muskego lay preachers to constitute themselves the final authorities in spiritual matters. Though they performed such emergency acts as might any Christian under the circumstances, they kept in mind that these were

[11] *Ibid.*, 11. Johan R. Reiersen in *Veiviser for Norske Emigranter til de forenede nordamerikanske Stater og Texas* (Christiania, 1844) spoke slightingly of the Muskego settlement, giving it a bad reputation in Norway.

mere emergency makeshifts. In order to remedy a situation which manifestly did not fully serve their purpose, the Muskego lay preachers initiated the proceedings that culminated in the call and ordination of Claus Lauritz Clausen in 1843. That this arrangement was in harmony with the ideals of the Muskego leaders is best illustrated by the fact that Rev. C. L. Clausen preached in Heg's barn until a more suitable house of worship could be erected. The Muskego lay preachers assumed the leadership in the emergency created by the absence of pastors; after the pastors came they yielded their post of leadership and assumed their position among the laity. There was thus at Muskego at least a very friendly attitude toward the pastoral office, with none of the deep-seated animosity toward the clerical class that we find at Fox River. Throughout it all there is evident a very fine sense of propriety and a definite recognition of the limitations that good church order sets upon the functions of a lay leader.

At Fox River the situation was quite different. Though there might have been some realization of the need for certain pastoral services, Elling Eielsen's fiery and indiscriminate denunciations of the clergy as a class could not but tear down the settlers' respect for the clerical office. Not a few felt that real piety resided with the lay preachers rather than with the kind of State Church pastors they had known in Norway—for which opinion there were, alas, too good grounds. Since order was a strong point with the clerical class, these anti-clerical elements stressed informality to such a point that an almost complete lack of order resulted. Individual piety could best be developed under free forms, they maintained; but the absence of orderly safeguards quite generally resulted in a despotic domination by a few powerful leaders. Church order was largely disregarded by Eielsen on the ground that it was "high-churchly" and "State-churchly."

Even at this early stage, then, when there was not a single ordained Norwegian Lutheran pastor in America, a very noticeable difference existed between Fox River and Muskego, both of which were Haugean. In nothing is this difference more clearly brought out than in the attitude these settlements took toward Elling Eielsen. Elling Eielsen spent fully as much time at Muskego as at Fox River, and he even married a Muskego girl, Sigri Nelson by name, on July 3, 1843. At Muskego, Eielsen's invectives against the clergy only aroused disgust among the people, who greatly preferred the constructive work of Even Heg; at Fox River, these invectives were a source of strength to Eielsen. Consequently, when Eielsen made a bid for the leadership at Muskego as well as at Fox River, Muskego rejected him, whereas Fox River had accepted him. Had the temper of the people at Muskego been the same as at Fox River, they would have preferred Eielsen to Heg, Johannesen, and Bakke. Since Eielsen was an extreme partisan who distinguished very sharply between *ours,* as he called his adherents, and *the great mass* (den store hob), as he called those not belonging to him, Muskego's failure to accept

his leadership was sufficient cause for a cleavage. Right here, between Eielsen, still a lay preacher, and the lay leaders at Muskego, we have the seeds of dissension that were to bear an abundant crop of discussion and misery. It is the eternal question of power transferred from Norway to America. At the bottom of the cleavage that resulted in two distinct church traditions in America, typified later in the Norwegian Synod and the Hauge's Synod, we have, not so much a question of Lutheranism, nor even of Haugeanism (the original schism was between Haugeans), but one of the balance of power between the clergy and the so-called "laymen." This cleavage was brought to America by the immigrants themselves, as we very clearly see from the difference in temper already apparent at Muskego and Fox River. For this, let no one blame the pastors; there were no ordained Lutheran pastors among the Norwegians in America at this time. To understand this difference in temperament we must go back to conditions in Norway as they were at the time of emigration.

The fundamental reason for the difference that was already apparent between the Muskego and Fox River settlers is directly traceable to different religious backgrounds in Norway. The Fox River settlement was recruited chiefly from Stavanger, where it is admitted by even the most zealous defenders of the liberal religious policy of Norway that some persecutions took place. The Constitution of 1814 provided for religious liberty within the Lutheran Church, but the eventuality of a non-Lutheran sect coming to Norway was not provided for in this hastily drawn up document. Consequently, when the converts to Quakerism returned to Stavanger after the peace of 1814,[12] the officials of the Church and State were confronted by a situation in which they had to act "according to their discretion." Stephen Grellet, as we have seen, through the French king memorialized the king of Sweden and Norway in behalf of the Quakers, and the king promised leniency. But the Quakers, whose delight it was to fly in the face of the existing order in Church and State both in England and America, could hardly be expected to adapt themselves to the established order of things in Norway. Mr. B. L. Wick says, as we have already observed, that "they [the Quakers] discarded water baptism, accepted no Lord's Supper, refused to take an oath, objected to the military service imposed by law upon every able-bodied Norseman"—in all, four counts, two against the Church and two against the State. The Quakers were so revolutionary for those times that the local Church and State officials soon felt constrained to take action. Thus, before 1826 Elias Tastad suffered persecution on the point of the Quaker burial of his twin daughters,[13] and between 1830 and 1845 the Quakers, who sometimes recklessly challenged the power of Church and State,

[12] See above, 24 ff.

[13] Gunnar Malmin, "Norsk Landnam i U. S.," III, in *Decorah Posten*, November 28, 1924.

suffered certain inconveniences. The average citizen, not always able to distinguish between governmental oppression and the legitimate enforcement of existing laws, usually sympathized with the Quakers, especially since the Quakers lost no opportunity to befriend the masses, whereas the overbearing officials often shocked and startled the people by their brutal conduct. Just why the Haugeans at Stavanger sympathized with the Quakers becomes entirely clear when we consider that Haugeanism here represented a number of different types of people, whose chief bond of union was opposition to the governing classes in Church and State. Stavanger also furnished the mighty leader of the whole revolt—Ole Gabriel Ueland. This solid Stavangering *bonde* dominated the entire nation for a short time, defying even the king of Sweden-Norway. At Stavanger, the center of this whole movement of revolt against the clergy and office-holding class, feeling naturally ran high against these classes. And sympathy and fellowship in a struggle of this kind could not but result in an interchange of views also on points of church government. Eielsen thus had several very distinctly Quakerish ideas on church government which the Stavangerings at Fox River (among whom were many Quakers) shared fully with him. He believed in an extremely free, almost unorderly, form of church worship in which the spirit should be untrammeled. Anyone who had the inner call could preach, whether man or woman; indeed it was said that Mrs. Elling Eielsen preached better than her husband did. Eielsen also had something that approached the "inner light" of the Quakers.[14] Eielsen, of course, did not share the Quaker view that the Sacraments should be dispensed with, but he laid such stress on subjective feeling, particularly in conversion, that the objective need of the Sacrament was somewhat left out of consideration. In such a scheme of things the pastor was not of much use, as he was by no means to have undisputed right to religious leadership in this spiritual priesthood of believers. Nor were his services in connection with the administration of the Sacraments of paramount importance where subjective values overshadowed the objective. Had it not been for the move made by the Muskego lay preachers to ordain Clausen, it is uncertain whether the Fox River settlers would have desired any change in their system, since their leaders were everything but friendly toward the pastors. The Fox River "laymen's activity," in which practically all functions are either centered in lay leaders or ignored, was abandoned when Eielsen was ordained in 1843, though his attitude toward the pastors remained unchanged. Like Janus of old, he faced in both directions, being an ardent "layman" at the same time as he himself claimed to be ordained.

In contrast to this, the settlers of Muskego were of a very different type. Coming from Voss, Numedal, and Telemarken, they

[14] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed*, 29 (reminded by his spirit not to remain); 33 (given power by Holy Spirit to remember Bible passages), and other references.

had felt, it is true, the impulses both of the social revolution and of Eielsen's work while he was in Norway, but had retained in a general way their respect and affection for their pastors, with the result that when they came to America they preferred the more formal Lutheran church order with a pastor as the chief functionary to the more informal, low-church, Fox River order. Eielsen was from Voss, but he differed greatly from the people of his home district on this point.

Political events had also taken a sharp turn in 1836, giving the immigrants of 1839 a far different "last impression" as they left the motherland than that gotten by the emigrants of 1833 and on. Since these "last impressions," like arrested memories, were perennially new in the immigrant's mind, they became more than passing events in the drama of life: forms long since passed away were continually on the stage, and the issues of a past generation were not cooled nor solved but left just as he last saw them. These impressions play in also in his American interests. The later arrivals had witnessed a political reaction which took its beginning in 1836, so that in 1839 and in 1842 the *bönder*-Haugean combination did not return majorities to the Storthing. This revulsion of feeling had tended to give the pastor his rightful place as a reaction against the extreme claims of some lay leaders who earnestly strove to wrest from the clergy certain rights and privileges that for ages had been vested solely in them. This was too much for the conservative Norwegians, who were not ready for changes of this kind. What the pastors thus gained in popular estimation was reflected by the later arrivals, among whom there were hundreds who would not raise their voices to preach, but who, nevertheless, spoke by the mighty voice of preference. The later arrivals at Muskego came with a different "last impression" from that brought over by many of the Fox River settlers who had come to America several years earlier. These two factors, then, the different religious experiences in the old country, and the changed political-social conditions in the homeland, must form the background against which must be thrown the contrasting figures of Eielsen and the Muskego lay preachers. Of similar spirit to Muskego, and soon to surpass it in number of inhabitants, was the Koshkonong settlement, which in 1840 had seven or eight hundred souls, Muskego six hundred, and Fox River four hundred and fifty.[15]

Whatever success the Fox River lay system had at first, it soon became evident that it could not make good its claims to lay leadership similar to that exercised successfully in Norway. In spite of all revolts, the pastors in Norway had remained a superposed clerical class conveniently at hand to administer the Sacraments, solemnize marriage, and bury the dead. But in America there was no such superposed class, as the lay leaders were soon to realize. Certain psychological factors aided the lay system at first, but the sobering

[15] R. B. Anderson, *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration*, 438.

effect of pioneer life soon exposed its weaknesses and inadequacy. In the face of new adventure and exaggerated ideas of what the future had in store, the immigrant refused to think seriously about what it would mean to build a church in a "free country." If he thought of it at all, it was as any child of the State Church might visualize it. In Norway the State appointed the clergy, superintended their conduct in office, and levied taxes on the people for their support. Since the pastor was more of an official of the State than a servant of the congregation, the relation between congregation and pastor was not as a rule very intimate and confidential. Even where a fairly good relationship had existed, this relationship had become somewhat strained at the time of emigration. Instead of feeling that the pastors' warnings against the dangers of emigration were sincere, the emigrant quite often regarded them as expressions of prejudice and wounded pride. Some even delighted in the thought that their pastor, who on other occasions had been able to command, now was reduced to the necessity of coaxing and cajoling. Since they wished to get away from their hard lot in Norway, the people put more faith in Rynning's, Nattestad's, and later, Johan Reinert Reiersen's assertions that there were numberless sects in America, all believing in one true God, than in the pastors' pessimistic description of the spiritual pitfalls in the new land. With a fling of independence, they airily declared themselves free from priestly dominance; they set out for America feeling that the pastors were all wrong. These satiate children of the State Church, who could hardly conceive of a situation where spiritual boons were not heaped, yes, at times, forced, upon them, left the Mother Church with a certain feeling of peevishness, little dreaming that these boons would ever be regarded in any other light.

This attitude has often been described as being the result of "persecution." That it was nothing of the kind can be seen from the fact that many who had never been "persecuted," but, on the contrary, were quite staunch church people both in Norway and America, for a time suffered under this nausea of spiritual satiety. In this state it mattered little who preached, or what was preached, so long as the preachers did not demand more than occasional church attendance and a semblance of spiritual respectability.

But the immigrants were soon to realize that the pastors' overdrawn and fanciful pictures of the hardships of emigration had an allegoric, though not a literal, basis in truth; instead of sea-monsters there were other dangers that were far more real and terrible. Leave-taking was to be harder than they had imagined; travel by ill-equipped conveyances was both tedious and dangerous; and at every turn there were sharpers and swindlers who tried the wits and the patience of these simple, but honest, people. Land had to be selected, and while the husband walked the seventy miles or so to obtain his title to it, the wife and children were in constant apprehension lest something should happen to themselves or to the hus-

band. A log hut or "dugout" became the primitive seat of the blessed and mighty institution called "home." More pressing duties prevented the husband from attending to such details as building a fence around the "house" to prevent wild animals from prowling, and the cattle from licking the windowpanes and foraging for clothing or other articles left outside the doorstep by the busy housewife.[16] When they were somewhat past the absorbing bustle of getting shelter, it dawned upon them that this "house," serviceable as it might be, was not "home" to them. Not realizing that it takes time for the fine tendrils of home ties and home experiences to take root, they, like the homesick souls of old, hung their harps on the willows because their hearts refused to sing. They were not easily consoled. The birds did not sing here as in Norway; the timid flowers that hid their blazing crowns in the tall grass did not have the wonted fragrance; the berries on the fat American hillsides were not so sweet as those on the chary Norwegian mountainsides;[17] and trees and rugged landscapes were liabilities, not objects of beauty. It was a hard and sad, though not joyless, life. Would to God they had followed their pastor's good advice!

With the thought of the pastor's good advice in practical affairs, came a flood of half-forgotten spiritual admonitions, particularly to read the Word of God diligently. One by one the devotional books and hymnals emerge from their covert without ostentation, and the diffident immigrant now takes hold of his old hymn-book and with rusty voice begins to sing. He soon forgets his embarrassment, and his song, like the skylark's, grows in volume and beauty as his spirit rises and approaches nearer the throne of grace.[18] Spiritual hunger had arisen where formerly there had been only satiety: the Word of the Lord was becoming precious in the land.

Nor did the work of his hands prosper as he had dreamt it should. When, after boundless exertion, he had cleared a plot of ground, or staked out some prairie, and with his slow-going oxen and primitive plow had turned the sod, the decaying vegetation, instead of serving the immigrant by enriching the soil, struck back at its destroyer by producing malaria, ague, and fever. Prof. Anderson describes this:

> The season of fever and ague has come. We visit a little log cabin, and find all its occupants sick. In this home and in these surroundings which required all the patience and resignation that could be mustered in health, sickness wears a darker garb, and the new settlement always gets a double amount of sickness. The few distant neighbors are afflicted in a similar manner and can render no

[16] Some of these inconveniences are described by Elizabeth Koren in her delightful *Erindringer* (Recollections). Mrs. Koren was the wife of Dr. V. Koren, pioneer pastor and president of the Norwegian Synod from 1894 to 1910.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] Th. Bothne, *op. cit.*, tells of how touched he was once at seeing a strong man sit outside his "dugout" singing the powerful hymns out of a well-worn Lutheran *Salmebog* (hymnal).

> assistance. The poor invalids need stout hearts and steady nerves not to quail under their affliction, and repent the day when they resolved to emigrate; but the bridges are burnt behind them and there is nothing for them to do but make the best of it. How gloomy the world looks through those bilious eyes with throbbing temples and aching limbs! Death would be a relief to that homesick heart. There were seasons in the Fox River settlement and at Koshkonong when nearly all the inhabitants were prostrated by ague and fever.[19]

Rev. C. L. Clausen says that in 1843 in Muskego only one house escaped the ravages of these enervating diseases; deaths occurred daily.[20] These fearful conditions brought forth unprecedented deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice. Though exposure often meant death, the settlers ministered tenderly to each other's needs as far as means and endurance at all permitted. Partly because the settlers were too ill to till the soil, and partly because of the influx of poverty-stricken immigrants who soon fell ill, the slender means of the settlers were so completely exhausted that financial aid actually had to be sought from outsiders.[21] What little there had been of "milk and honey" so far in this lonely and terrible land had been badly mixed with the bitter salt of briny tears; indeed, it might truly be said that the soil of Muskego, Koshkonong, and Fox River had been consecrated by the tears of brave men and women who suffered almost beyond human endurance.

In the face of the terrible realities of hardships, privations, sickness, and death, where human endeavors and calculations counted for so little, the immigrant, who had come to America chiefly to earn his bread, found that man does not live by bread alone. He turned with avidity to the self-constituted lay preachers, and though he received much comfort from the Word the Lord put into the mouths of these, it became increasingly evident that, once the craving for spiritual things had arisen, the immigrant would not be content with their imperfect and partial presentation of the Gospel Truth. It was not that the lay preachers lacked spiritual vision—they had that, though the spiritual eye of many of them was blurred by the cataracts of prejudice and anti-clericalism. Even this could have been overlooked, had the lay preachers been at all able to cope with the situation otherwise. The lay preachers could preach; yet it was not the full-rounded Gospel with the objective as well as the subjective note that the immigrant had heard from the well-educated clergy in Norway. The lay preachers could baptize; yet, at best, though always regarded valid, these baptisms were mere emergency acts to be confirmed by a pastor in church. Under the sore and constant trial of faith, the need of the Lord's Supper was felt very keenly by the lonesome,

[19] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.*, 436.
[20] Quoted by H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift til den Norske Synodes Jubilaeum 1853-1903* (Lutheran Publishing House, Decorah, Iowa, 1903), 15.
[21] *Ibid.*

the sick, the dying, and the bereaved. Some lay preachers presumed to administer this Sacrament,[22] but many Christians objected to this practice. Though the immigrants could be married by a justice of the peace, they desired the blessings of the Church on their union, a thing which they felt that the unordained were unauthorized to give.[23] In the matter of the cure of souls, the laymen were deficient in certain elements of training and in the broad knowledge of human nature that would enable them to be of help to those whose spiritual experiences had been different from their own. But the decisive test of their sufficiency came in the dark hour when death snatched away one of the family. For centuries the conception had been built up that the dead must be properly buried—the people shuddered at the fate of the ungodly who were denied these last sacred rites. Although lay preachers could perform these rites, it was not by any means the same as if performed by an ordained pastor.

Not only did the lay preachers fall short at the crucial points as to the quality of their ministration, but the pretentious among them were powerless to impress the average immigrant with the dignity of their self-constituted office.[24] Björnson's statement that, "in the minds of the Norwegian people the church stands on a high place," has a twofold meaning: The Norwegians have built the House of God (usually on a high hill) about as soon as they have finished their own homes; and they have put the Church and all that is connected with it outside the vulgar domains of the commonplace. The pastor was truly "set apart" as a man of God, and though these early lay preachers in America enjoyed the fullest confidence of the people, the people felt very keenly that the holy offices should not be performed by one of their own number.

On the whole, it must be said that by the middle of 1843 there was a conscious or unconscious desire for services by regularly ordained clergy. The lay preachers had performed a most useful labor of love and mercy, but the increasing population and the bitter experiences of pioneer life demanded more systematic and thorough spiritual work. The immigrants, who had seemingly broken the bands of spiritual restraint, were now ready and willing to share their huts, their half-tame stock, the meager returns for their strenuous labors, yes, the very necessaries of life, with any pastor who was kind and brave enough to come to America to break the Bread of Life for them.

In this period of unorganized lay activity, ending in October, 1843, we have taken into account the immediate causes for the first emigration of 1825; we have examined the religious history of the

[22] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *Reise*, 36.

[23] See H. G. Stub, "Fra fars of mors liv," in *Symra*, 1907, 21.

[24] This needs to be stressed in view of the claims made for the lay preachers both in Norway and America. See Osc. Alb. Johnsen, *Norges Historie*, V-2, 234.

Sloop Party; and we have considered the later emigration and followed it out in detail as far as it is necessary, taking into account the rival attraction of America and Norway. We have devoted some space to a possible solution of why the early Haugeans fell prey to the sects. We have spoken of the Fox River type of Lutheran lay preacher culminating in Eielsen, and contrasted this with the Muskego type, trying, finally, to explain the difference. Of this whole period it is well to remember that, after all, the settlers were comparatively few in number. Even in these early days the immigrants were separating into two Lutheran camps with such fundamentally different church tendencies that a conflict was unavoidable. At the end of the period from 1825 to the middle of 1843 the lay preachers had been found wanting, and the people were ready for the ministry of pastors. Had all the lay preachers and their partisans fallen in line with this new development, almost three generations of strife and conflict could have been avoided.

The transition from lay to pastoral leadership in the religious activities of the settlements is marked by the coming of Clausen to Muskego in August, 1843. Clausen's coming is connected with another phenomenon which is entirely foreign to the State Church in Norway or elsewhere, viz., foreign missionary activity.

Since foreign missions are not in any way compatible with the genius of a State Church, one might easily surmise that this worthy movement owed its inception to the independent spirit of the Stavangerings, who, in turn, might have gotten the idea from the Herrnhuts or the Quakers, although the modern Protestant missionary movement is of Lutheran origin. Wherever they got the idea, the Stavangerings organized a mission society as early as 1826. Enthusiasm for foreign missions spread rapidly among the Haugeans as a result of John Haugvaldstad's untiring effort. Consequently, by 1841 sixty local societies for the conversion of the heathen had been established throughout Norway. In order to concentrate their forces, these were amalgamated on August 8, 1842, into one society called "The Norwegian Mission Society." This society established its own school for the education of prospective missionaries and, in the short interval between the death of Hersleb and Steenersen and the appointment of Gisle Johnson and Carl Paul Caspari to professorships of theology at Christiania University, this mission school exerted some influence in the absence of strong leadership at the university. In 1842 the cause of foreign missions received a powerful impetus from the word and example of a young man, the later Bishop Hans Palludan Smith Schreuder. This youth of twenty-four, just out of the theological seminary, wrote an epochal missionary challenge to the Norwegian Church entitled *A Few Words to the Norwegian Church.* This challenge was backed by Schreuder's declaration that he was going out to convert the heathen. William Carey's appeal to the English Church hardly made a deeper impression on the English people than this made on the Norwegians. These

mpulses were so powerful that they found their way to a young man, Claus Lauritz Clausen, in far-away Denmark. And through Clausen and others, this movement to convert the heathen brought untold blessings to the children of the Norwegian Church on the American continent.

Claus Lauritz Clausen [25] was born at Aeroe, Denmark, November 3, 1820. His father, a keeper of a country store, gave his boy a good common school education and then sent him to a law school where he studied for three years. Much to his father's disappointment, young Clausen abandoned the study of law and took up theology instead. The immediate cause for this change of plans was the Grundtvigian revival which was sweeping the country, arousing the people everywhere to great spiritual activity, especially along the line of foreign missions. After two years of theological studies, during which time he made his own way by tutoring, Clausen determined to go to Norway where he hoped to have the privilege of being sent to Zululand, Africa, with Schreuder. When Clausen came to Norway, however, so many obstacles barred his path that he concluded that it was not God's will that he should go to Africa. His attention was soon directed to another quarter.

In the meantime Clausen had made the acquaintance of Tollef Bakke, a pious merchant from Drammen, who was a personal friend of Hans Nielsen Hauge and one of Hauge's staunch supporters.[26] Tollef Bakke had long been solicitous about the religious instruction of his grandchildren, Sören Bakke's children at Muskego; hence, after satisfying himself as to Clausen's qualifications, he proposed that Clausen go to America to teach the children in the Muskego settlement the Lutheran fundamentals. So long as there was any hope of going to Africa, Clausen would not seriously consider the proposal; but when his dreams of going with Schreuder were shattered, and when, in the meantime, Tollef Bakke had received a mandate signed by twenty Muskego settlers to arrange for Clausen's engagement as a teacher, Clausen regarded this as a call of God and dedicated his life and interests henceforth to the American, instead of the African, continent. The young man who had stood with his scrip in his hand for so long naturally needed very little time for further preparation before his departure for America. He did take time, however, to arrange a pesonal matter in Denmark—his marriage to the noble and lovable Martha F. Rasmussen, the first gracious occupant of that great spiritual and cultural stronghold in Norwegian-American church life, the Lutheran parsonage. When Clau-

[25] Biographical materials on this notable man can be found in any manual on Norwegian American history.

[26] The main source for this part of the history of Norwegian American Lutheranism is J. W. C. Dietrichson, *Reise blandt de norske Emigranter i "De forenede nordamerikanske Fristater,"* Stavanger, 1846. Originals of this very rare book are found in the Library of Congress, Koren Library, Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, and other places. R. B. Anderson made a reprint of it in 1896.

sen came to claim his promising young bride, she proved to be a brave, devoted, and consecrated Christian who was willing to follow the man of her choice to the ends of the world if need be. Though America in those days, thanks to the stories set afloat by the anti-emigrationists, had a reputation hardly less terrible than Africa itself, this young couple did not flinch in the face of their God-given task, but set out bravely on their journey. After suffering the customary hardships of the slow travel of the day, they reached Muskego on August 8, 1843.

Clausen, it seems, had come to America to teach, though he possibly from the first had anticipated the eventuality of being ordained, as he made provisions for a possible ordination both in Norway and along the route of his slow travels in America. Here, again, it became evident that ready-made European solutions do not fit American situations and problems. In Norway, teaching, backed up as it is by the established Lutheran Church, is a profession of great religious power and influence: in America, however, teaching, though supported by the State, is hardly a profession and perforce is strictly neutral on religious issues.[27] The Muskego settlers soon saw that, if Clausen were to teach religion, he must do it through support from the Church and not from the State. In the meantime, Clausen taught in a parochial school, read sermons out of the postils, and, possibly, also preached occasionally. On the whole he gave such satisfaction that the settlers, who had despaired of getting ordained ministers from Norway, issued Clausen a call, signed by sixty-nine men, under date of September 13, 1843. Clausen accepted the call subject to his ability to fulfil all the requirements (call, examination, and ordination) pertaining to a rightly instituted minister of the Means of Grace. Having used no unfair means in connection with its issuance, he had what he considered a divine call. In the presence of A. Hansen, Sören Bakke, and Even Heg—"the representatives of Muskego congregation"—and of representatives of Rev. L. T. E. Krause's congregation at Freystadt, Krause duly examined Claus Lauritz Clausen, October 13, 1843, and found him qualified, intellectually and religiously, for the office of the ministry. On October 18, 1843, Krause ordained Clausen on the call from "the Norwegian evangelical Lutheran congregation in Racine and Milwaukee Counties in the assembly of the congregation at Heg, in accordance with the Church Ritual of Denmark and Norway."[28]

Possibly because there had been so many spurious preachers who claimed some sort of ordination, and possibly also on account of the influence of Unonius, who was very strong on "orders," Clausen took every precaution to have the validity of his ordination recognized. Accordingly, he laid the whole sacred transaction before a German Lutheran Synod at Milwaukee, which body found the ordination regular and valid in every way. The theological faculty at Christiania, Norway, whom he also asked for an opinion in the

[27] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *op. cit.*, 28. [28] J. A. Bergh, *op cit.*, 17.

matter, likewise found it valid, saying that under the extraordinary circumstances a man not having had a full theological training could rightly seek, and be given, ordination. Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, who came to Muskego the following year, made a strong point in answer to those who challenged the validity of the ordination on the ground it had not been performed by a bishop (Unonius?) by saying that this did not at all invalidate the ordination since all the essential elements—the call, examination, and consecration—were undeniably present.[29]

From Dietrichson's hot defense of Clausen one might rightly conclude that there were those who still challenged the validity of Clausen's ordination in 1845 when the *Reise* was written. This reflects quite clearly the churchliness at least of those who with some degree of sincerity called the validity of the ordination in question. The pastors as a class in Norway were far removed from the average man, inasmuch as the average man hardly ever ventured to seek either theological instruction or ordination. Class distinction had operated so effectively that the clerical office was practically closed to those who were not of the "conditioned" office-holding classes. Even in "free" America the settlers retained some of their aristocratic ideals, and the psychology of the situation would work against the democratic Clausen in his effort to gain recognition as a pastor after he had served even a very short time as a teacher. The mere accident of ordination was not enough to elevate the merchant's son a great deal above the Muskego leaders, who also were merchants. His youth and democratic temperament probably made it distasteful for Clausen to assume the benevolent despotism which generations of the office-holding clergy had made the people accustomed to in Norway. When, under the leadership of Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, Clausen did begin to assert certain prerogatives of his office, this fitful assertion naturally only aroused opposition. Torn between his sympathy and love for his people, and his high conception of his sacred office, especially as set forth by Dietrichson, the young Clausen did not succeed in injecting a spirit of firmness into his work. Under the circumstances, it was impossible to be a democratic churchman, as the people easily misunderstood any attempt to bridge the gulf existing between clergy and laity; a pastor had to make a thoroughgoing assertion of the full prerogatives of his office, or else invite trouble. While Clausen might rightly be styled the forerunner of a certain type of democratic churchman who was later to become very popular, his methods were manifestly out of place at this time and perhaps gave the impression that he was timid. On the other hand, the Muskego laymen were possibly stronger in the theory of church government than in the practice of it; they could observe a correct attitude in the absence of a pastor, without fully yielding all the prerogatives that his absence had given them. Indeed, it can be said both in praise and derogation of Clausen that he was "a

[29] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *op. cit.*, 28 ff.

man of the people" who, on the one hand, understood the people, but, on the other, was a little too ready to yield to public opinion. At any rate, Clausen, though far more churchly than Eielsen, was not the man to lay the foundation for the organized Norwegian Lutheran church work in the Middle West.

But his admittedly somewhat weak congregational rule did not prevent Clausen from doing some very excellent pastoral work. This, indeed, was his strong point, as his mild and winning personality made him easily accessible to the mass of the people. He was also a very eloquent preacher and made a very good impression throughout the various settlements.

On October 19, 1843, the day after his ordination, Rev. C. L. Clausen conducted the first of fifty-four funerals in a period covering the four last months of 1843. This terrible toll of death was taken from the small Muskego settlement alone. In the month of November there were thirty-two funerals, eight of which were performed on the same day. On December 17 there were nine, and on January 1 there were seventeen.[30] These were the dead; the number of the sick ran into the hundreds, and between burying the dead and visiting the sick the young pastor of twenty-three years still found time for making extended trips to the neighboring settlements.

Under this terrific strain Clausen, whose health always was delicate, was ably supported by his wife. Besides radiating cheer and hope from the congregational hearthstone, she found time to gather the children of the immigrants together for religious instruction, receiving in return no salary, little gratitude, but much petty abuse, and—sometimes—even open hostility.[31] Such were the beginnings of the parochial summer school system among the Norwegian Lutherans in America. Out of the bitterness of parting with dear ones in the fatherland, or from her loneliness in America, was wrung Mrs. Clausen's beautiful song which shall ever be her monument: "And now we must bid one another farewell." Mrs. Clausen's day, though eventful and full of blessings, was short; she died in 1846, the first Norwegian Lutheran pastor's wife to lay down her life in the service of the Master in America.

Something must be said about the "congregation" at Muskego. No formal organization was effected, though the joint action of the settlers in sending Clausen a call on September 13, 1843, to administer the Means of Grace must be regarded as the beginning of the "congregation," since, as Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, in language that needs qualification, observed, "where God's Word is preached and the Sacraments are administered according to the order of the church through the rightfully instituted clerical office, there a congregation is formed." The "congregation," though it had no constitution or other forms of organization, must be dated from September 13,

[30] J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.*, 17; H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift*, 15.
[31] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *op. cit.*, 41.

1843, when the sixty-nine met to send a call to Clausen over their own names. At a "regular congregational meeting" in November the "congregation" voted: 1. That the pastor's salary for the present should consist of "voluntary contributions by members of the congregation—in money, goods, or work—though always provided that one-fourth shall be in money. 2. That the erection of a church should be commenced. 3. That the pastor be permitted to visit the western settlements, since he for the time being looked upon his work as of a missionary character, with Muskego as his base." All unanimously adopted.[32]

Though Clausen's call already covered "Racine and Milwaukee Counties" (see above), it was felt by the time of this meeting in November that the "congregation" must share its pastor with the "western settlements." The vague limits set by this latter resolution were rapidly being extended, so that Clausen and his fellow-pastors traveled thousands of miles in whatever conveyance they could commandeer between the settlements that were springing up in what is now Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota. John Wesley himself showed no more zeal than some of these pastors who walked, rode on ox wagons and on horseback, swam rivers, and in general had numberless experiences that more highly extolled heroes would envy them. Though many of the pastors who cast their lot with Clausen within the next decade were from the best and most aristocratic families of Norway, they speedily adjusted themselves to the pioneer standards with a heroism and fortitude that did them credit. In spite of their many hardships these rugged pioneer pastors, most of them, lived to a ripe old age, showing that there must have been spiritual—and possibly physical—rewards and returns that eased their burdened minds and bodies. Clausen's health gave way after a few years, but by that time he had been relieved of bearing the heaviest part of the load, as other men came who not only carried on the pastoral and congregational work, but supplemented this by a type of organized churchmanship which was not directly in line with Clausen's special talents. Clausen was the mild and humble pastor, a man of the people, but he was hardly capable at this time of perpetuating his labors by laying the broad foundations for organized church work; at any rate, he neglected to take the initiative in organizing his "congregations" into anything that could be called an organic church body which could function under the stress of dissension.

Returning to Elling Eielsen, we find that he had done about the last thing we should expect of him: He had been ordained! He had not weakened in his vigorous denunciations of the clergy, nor can we conceive of Eielsen copying from anyone, least of all from Clausen, who, by being called to Muskego, automatically stepped into the breach between Eielsen and the Muskego lay preachers. About the only reason that can be adduced for this rather strange act on Eielsen's

[32] Most available source is J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.*, 19.

part, is that the same popular sentiment which required that Clausen be ordained became too strong for Eielsen also, who, rather than be left high and dry, submitted to ordination. This explanation becomes very plausible when we look into the circumstances attending Eielsen's rather abrupt change of front on this point.

Eielsen met Clausen at the home of Even Heg in August, 1843, and though Clausen may have desired to come to an understanding, Eielsen was suspicious of a man who was openly friendly toward vestments, ritual, churchliness, and the clergy. Under the trees at Muskego, back and forth, these men walked in the hush of night discussing in serious and subdued tones the issues which were to unite or separate thousands of Lutherans. Whatever was said, or whoever was to blame, the mild-tempered Clausen and the obdurate Eielsen found no basis for agreement, the chief cause for dissension being Clausen's intentions of being ordained.[33] Eielsen's opposition to the ordained clergy was thus so great in August, 1843, that he, mainly for that reason, could not give Clausen the right hand of fellowship.

And yet, not many weeks after the incident at Heg's home, as Clausen was going past the house of Paul Skavlem at Rock Prairie, Wisconsin, Eielsen came out to meet him and joyfully remarked that he, too, was now ordained. In substantiation of this statement he took out a certificate signed by Francis Alex. Hoffman, D.D., "secretary for the Ministerium of the Lutheran Church of Northern Illinois," saying that Eielsen had been ordained on October 3, 1843. In the span of the month of September, allowing a few days before and after the calendar month, Eielsen had thus not only overcome his revulsion for the ministry, but had actually procured what has ever since been known as his "ordination." After examining the certificate, Clausen handed it back to Eielsen, saying that it was merely a "license." [34] Though the validity of this ordination, first called in question by Clausen, has been hotly contested, there seems to be no reason for believing that it is invalid or irregular. While Eielsen may have sought ordination in an abrupt manner, and also neglected certain elements, as for instance, being carefully examined, the essential features of an ordination were satisfactorily observed.

Naturally, if even Clausen's carefully planned ordination was not above attack, what occasion did not Eielsen's characteristically "informal" ordination give for tongues to wag? Not only did those who knew Eielsen's attitude toward the clergy question his motives, but his disregard of the proper formalities in connection with the transaction gave the many others whom Eielsen had offended in one way or another occasion to attack the very validity of the ordination. Thus Clausen, even to his dying day, regarded himself as the first ordained Norwegian Lutheran pastor in America,[35] a preposterous

[33] For this meeting, and Eielsen's opposition to Clausen on the score he was to be ordained, see Bergh, *op. cit.*, 22.

[34] J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.*, 22. [35] *Ibid.*, 21.

claim if he had recognized Eielsen's ordination, which took place October 3, 1843, a fortnight before his own, which took place October 18, 1843. All Eielsen was to Clausen was a "licensed" lay preacher who had gone through a certain form of licensing at the hands of Dr. Francis Alex. Hoffman. In spite of Eielsen's transactions with Dr. Hoffman, Clausen stoutly held that by the end of 1843 there was only one Norwegian Lutheran pastor in America.

Conceding the validity of Eielsen's ordination, we thus find that both Muskego and Fox River had now abandoned the lay system and each had ordained a lay preacher out of its own midst to serve as pastor.

CHAPTER IV

DIETRICHSON—KOSHKONONG

We have traced Norwegian Lutheranism through its early centers in America, stressing especially Fox River and Muskego. While Muskego represents a notable advance over Fox River in the point of churchliness and general friendliness toward the clerical class, Muskego was not able to assume the leadership in the great task of organizing Norwegian Lutheranism in America. This responsibility was largely assumed by Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, who made Koshkonong his headquarters.

On the whole, the people, though often abusing the liberties that they were supposed to have in "free" America, responded quite heartily to the efforts of Rev. and Mrs. C. L. Clausen. At the same time that Clausen had great difficulty in enforcing discipline at Muskego "according to the Church Ritual of Denmark and Norway," [1] the people out in the settlements valued services such as his so highly that four of these—Rock Prairie, Jefferson Prairie, Rock Run, and Hamilton—in February, 1844, sent a joint letter to Bishop Sorenson of Christiania, Norway, asking him to send them a suitable pastor.[2] The settlements pledged themselves to pay three hundred dollars a year, plus three annual offerings and the use of eighty acres of land. In July, 1844, the bishop replied that he had ordained a young man (on February 26, 1844) and that this young man had left for America before their letter reached the bishop. Thus it happened that Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson came to America without a call to a definite place, and that on his arrival here, he chose Koshkonong instead of these four settlements as the headquarters for his activity.

On the surface of it, it might appear as though the State Church, through its bishop, was sending help to its emigrated children. Far from it. Though there were many theological candidates who were without parishes in Norway at this time,[3] they had no thought of going to America, for the members of the clergy in general looked askance at emigration, the more unsympathetic of them possibly feeling that no great harm would result if the emigrants suffered from their self-willed acts. In 1846 Dietrichson reproved this attitude in

[1] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *Reise,* 39.
[2] *Ibid., Reise,* 81.
[3] Th. Bothne, "Eielsen" in *Kort Udsigt,* 831.

the State Church of Norway.[4] Not until a new generation of pastors was produced under the inspiration of the great-hearted professors, Gisle Johnson and Carl Paul Caspari, did any marked change take place in the attitude of the members of the clergy toward America.

In view of this general antipathy of the members of the clergy to emigration and the emigrants, it becomes increasingly strange that Dietrichson, an aristocrat and a stickler for form and churchly authority, should get the idea that he wanted to go to America. With characteristic energy and independence, he followed an impulse from Grundtvigian sources and determined to do the very unusual thing: go to America to bring order in the church affairs of his countrymen here. This man, with his very great and strong qualities and his corresponding weaknesses, deserves our attention for a moment.

John Wilhelm Christian Dietrichson, born April 4, 1815, was the son of Captain Dietrichson, at that time stationed at Fredrikstad, Norway, but later transferred to Stavanger.[5] Originally from Holstein, the Dietrichson family, from which have sprung many outstanding men in the army and the church, came to Norway in the "Danish times" and hence belonged strictly to the aristocratic "conditioned" class of office-holders. The outstanding characteristics of the family were their hot temper, overbearing, almost brutal, severity, and their inveterate lordliness. Upon Captain Dietrichson devolved the task of quelling the disturbances at Stavanger, and this he did with such great severity that he created many of the deep-seated antipathies that we have met with at Fox River. Young Wilhelm, being greatly impressed during his period of confirmation instruction under the pious Rev. J. Tandberg, took up the study of theology and received his degree in 1837. Two years later he married Jörgine Brock, but had the sorrow of losing her after a short time. This severe blow deepened his religious convictions, and Dietrichson now took up the study of the works of the great Danish religious leader, N. F. S. Grundtvig, with a great deal of earnestness. Though not committed to Grundtvig's more offensive aberrations, he did fall into several of the errors that Johnson and Caspari attacked so vigorously in the fifties. Dietrichson's Grundtvigianism was not to go unchallenged on American soil any less than Clausen's same tendencies.

Although it is somewhat generally true, as Th. Bothne says, that the Norwegians were more concerned about the salvation of the heathen than of people of their own flesh and blood, there were, thank God, some notable exceptions. We have noticed that, inspired by Schreuder's ringing appeal in behalf of the heathen, Tollef Bakke, merchant at Drammen, had gotten the idea that he should

[4] *Reise,* 114.

[5] For biographical materials see any manual on early Norwegian American Lutheranism. J. A. Bergh is not very sympathetic, though fair enough. Th. Bothne, whom we shall follow, is more sympathetic.

send Claus Lauritz Clausen to America to instruct his grandchildren in the Christian fundamentals.[6] At Christiania, P. Sörensen, a dyer, had been similarly inspired, and he was discussing the religious plight of his countrymen in America with the young candidate of theology, J. W. C. Dietrichson, when the question arose: Did not Dietrichson feel called to go to America to lay the foundations for a permanent church order among the emigrants? If so, Sörensen would scrape together the money from his small income and pay all the expenses of the trip.[7] Greatly touched by this really great sacrifice, the young candidate, after duly consulting his ecclesiastical superiors, decided to accept this as a call from God. His application for ordination was granted by the king under date of October 12, 1843, and, as mentioned above, he was ordained by Bishop Sörensen, February 26, 1844, at Oslo church.

Assured of his divine call, he set out for America, May 21, 1844, landed in New York, July 9, together with about one hundred emigrants, and, after making fairly good time according to the standards of travel of the day, he came to Milwaukee on August 5. On board ship he preached for the people and conducted school for the children. At New York he preached for some Norwegians and Swedes in a German Lutheran church. At Buffalo he preached in the German language to Rev. J. A. A. Grabau's congregation. From Milwaukee, the son of dancing master Hanson took him the twenty miles out to Muskego, where he immediately sought out Rev. C. L. Clausen. With Muskego as his temporary base, he set out to fulfil what he considered his mission in America: "To get information about the religious needs of the emigrated Norwegians, and to attempt to institute church order among them." Dietrichson set out alone and came to the settlements on Koshkonong Prairies, fifty miles west of Muskego. This colony comprised five separate settlements, of which four were in Dane County and the fifth was in Jefferson County—consequently quite near Madison, Wisconsin. Most of the seven or eight hundred settlers (1846) were from Telemarken, Numedal, Vos, and Sogndal, a fact worth noting in view of the distinction already drawn between these and the early Stavangerings at Fox River.

Out in Amund Endresen Hornefjeld's barn at Koshkonong he preached his two first sermons, using as the text for the first of these the words from Rev. iii.11: "Behold, I come quickly, hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown." Under an oak, now marked by a stone, he had his third service, at which he administered the Sacrament of the Altar to sixty persons. The text for the preparatory address was from Psalms lxxviii. 19: "Can God prepare a table in the wilderness?" These impressive services over, the people requested Dietrichson to remain as their pastor, but he felt he must make further investigations before he could act in the matter. After an extended trip throughout the settlements, he de-

[6] See above, 57.

[7] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *op. cit.*, 3 ff.

cided that Koshkonong Prairies were, on account of the size of the settlements and their central location, the most suitable base for his further activities. Dietrichson, an aristocrat of the aristocrats both as to family and temperament, cheerfully took up his abode in a small one-roomed log hut belonging to one of the Koshkonong settlers. From this spiritual palace he set about to order and rule the whole realm of Norwegian American Lutheranism.

Even before he was thus established, Dietrichson took stock of the other Norwegian pastors in America at the time,[8] to find out in how far he, the representative of the Norwegian State Church, could accept their ordinations as "legitimate." Clausen had no trouble on the score of "legitimation," and found in Dietrichson a warm defender against those who challenged the ordination, particularly because it had not been performed by a bishop. Clausen and Dietrichson were both at least mild Grundtvigians and they shared certain ideas on church government, which Clausen heretofore had not been able to put into practice. The dominating Dietrichson had no great difficulty in making Clausen fall in line with him, which, of course, was a guarantee that there would be peace in that quarter.

Not so with Eielsen. Here was a clash of extremes both in point of personal positiveness and in point of class pride and ideas of church government. Eielsen was extremely low-churchly in his ideas, bordering very nearly on Quakerism; Dietrichson was extremely high-churchly, bordering on high-church Episcopalianism. Eielsen was of the lower classes, who, under Ole Gabriel Ueland, had taken up the fight against the "conditioned" office-holding classes; Dietrichson was an extreme aristocrat with inborn ideas of the rights of his class. No wonder, then, that a clash had to take place between these two who represented the extremes of all the bitter antagonisms both in Church and State in Norway.

It did not take long for them to find grounds for a very bitter and unseemly quarrel. Naturally, if they wanted to quarrel, Eielsen's ordination was as convenient a subject as any. Eielsen resented the idea that he had to "legitimate" himself before Dietrichson, as though Dietrichson were a Norwegian bishop.[9] After a very violent collision on this point, Dietrichson set about to prove that Eielsen's ordination was irregular on at least two points: on the call, and on the examination. If these fall, then the third, the consecration, must also fall.

Dietrichson pounced on the lone testimony of Christen Olson Hole (?), whose name he wrote with a question mark, to the effect that Eielsen had "stolen" the names on the list purporting to be Eielsen's call, since they were gotten under false pretenses. Much as Eielsen might have sinned in this connection, we owe it to him to make the following observations: 1. Dietrichson cited only one witness; he should have been able to find more. Other signers

[8] *Ibid.*, 27 ff.

[9] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed*, 65.

of the list actually regarded Eielsen as their "called" pastor and accepted his services as such. 2. Dietrichson added a question mark after the name of his lone witness, evidently being uncertain about his name. He could not vouch for his character, seeing he could have known the man, at most, only for the short period of his first stay in America from August, 1844, to May, 1845. 3. Dietrichson was too anxious to find substantiation of former statements which he published in Norway about Eielsen, and to which influential Haugeans had taken exception. 4. Quite a few of the other charges against Eielsen's character and doctrine were petty, showing that Dietrichson's judgment on this point might have been influenced by his evident dislike for Eielsen. That Eielsen might have brought this attack upon himself should not blind us to his possible rights in the case. So much for Dietrichson. Some years later, Rev. H. A. Preus, convinced that Eielsen had not been rightly called, came to the conclusion that Eielsen's ordination was not valid, quoting the Lutheran maxim that "it is the call that makes the pastor." [10] Possibly from the same premises, Rev. P. A. Rasmussen, for a time one of Eielsen's supporters, declared at the meeting in Rock Prairie, Wisconsin, in 1858, that he had his doubts as to the validity of Eielsen's ordination.[11] The objection to the call, however, is not of great importance when we consider that there were those who had signed the list with the intention of calling Eielsen and had firmly adhered to this intention.

As for the examination, it was a distinctly humorous situation when the well-trained Dietrichson asked the relatively untutored Eielsen about his examination. To this question Eielsen replied that he had had a better examination than either Clausen or Dietrichson, inasmuch as he had been "tried as a Christian, tried under persecution, wakefulness, nakedness, and hunger"—in short, an apostolic trial by fire, as Dietrichson observes.[12] Possibly Rev. Francis Alex. Hoffman, D.D., had given Eielsen some sort of examination. That Hoffman later left the ministry and took up banking [13] has not been seriously advanced against the validity of the ordination, as that would have involved the accusants in Donatism. Setting aside entirely Eielsen's certificate of ordination, which both Dietrichson and Clausen had seen,[14] the pastors repeatedly asserted Eielsen had no proof of his ordination. Rev. H. A. Preus declared that his ordination could easily be acknowledged if Eielsen had not been a false teacher and the fomenter of an erring sect.[15]

But Eielsen could not be disposed of merely because Dietrichson read him out of the ministry. Eielsen went right into the midst of

[10] J. A. Bergh, *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika,* 23.
[11] *Ibid.,* 100.
[12] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *op. cit.,* 31.
[13] H. A. Preus, *Syv Foredrag over de Kirkelige Forhold blandt de Norske i Amerika,* 83.
[14] See Bergh, *op. cit.,* 21, for Clausen; and *Reise,* 31, for Dietrichson.
[15] H. A. Preus, *Syv Foredrag,* 83.

the parochial limits of his fellow-pastors and in true sectarian fashion established congregations for his followers, whom he called *ours*. These Ellingians, as one of them said, were extremely censorious, being prone to adjudge "ours" the heirs of life, while the others, "the great mass" (den store hob), could be given no such hope.[16] Eielsen and his associates carried on a most violent propaganda against the "dead," "blind," "priest-ridden," "State Church," "mass" Christianity of the congregations served by the other pastors. The fight was thus carried on in a very unrestrained manner on both sides. What had been brewing between Muskego and Fox River had now come to a most violent eruption through the inevitable clash between these extremes. Fox River and Koshkonong henceforth are the antipodes, with Muskego leaning strongly toward Koshkonong.

This conflict with Eielsen by no means distracted Dietrichson's attention from his main mission in America. Appraising the situation with the eye of a master strategist, he at once saw that he had to force the people to declare themselves for or against the Norwegian Lutheran Church and its church order; just what form this declaration should take, however, he could not so readily see. After due deliberation he finally determined upon these four conditions for membership:

> 1. Do you desire to become a member of the Norwegian Lutheran congregation at this place?
> 2. Will you to that end subject yourself to the church order that the Ritual of the Church of Norway prescribes?
> 3. Will you promise that you shall not call or accept any other minister and pastor than such as can clearly establish according to the Norwegian Lutheran Church Order that he is a regularly called and rightly consecrated pastor? And will you show the pastor thus called by you and the congregation to spiritual rulership the attention and obedience that a member of a congregation owes his pastor in all things that he requires and does according to the Ritual of the Church of Norway?
> 4. Will you, by signing your name or by permitting it to be signed, here make acknowledgment that you have joined the congregation on the above-named conditions?[17]

His reasons for binding the people to the regulations of the Church of Norway were: 1. To reclaim to a definite stand the bewildered and sect-ridden people who all nominally were, or had been, members of the Norwegian Lutheran Church. 2. To place before these people, who were at liberty to order their religious affairs in whatever form they thought best, a definite and tried form of church government. 3. To facilitate the transfer of pastors ordained in Norway, hence pledged to the Ritual of Denmark and Norway, to the American Lutheran Church. 4. To insure to those who valued the Church of Norway, its ritual and history, an unbroken continuity

[16] Bergh, *op. cit.*, 59.

[17] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *Reise*, 45.

of this Church upon American soil.[18] Apropos of the third condition, the real causes for the fearful religious disorders among the immigrants were, to his mind, the unclear ideas of the immigrants regarding the call, examination, and consecration of candidates for the holy ministry, the immigrants, in the absence of regularly ordained clergy, having accepted self-instituted ministers who further confused their ideas on these points. Similarly, in connection with the third condition, Dietrichson explained that, though a pastor is the servant of the congregation, he must, not in a papistic, but apostolic manner, demand the obedience due him as a spiritual ruler according to the words: "Obey them that have rule over you" (Heb. xiii. 17). As to the fourth question, the pastor might find it necessary in the case of the immigrants—who, to Dietrichson's mind, had ideas of unbridled liberties—to have definite pledges, voluntarily assumed, to fall back on in times of strife.[19]

On the whole, Dietrichson's four points were well taken. Here was a man who presumed to exercise the benevolent rule that the immigrants were accustomed to in Norway; and, since they necessarily did not know Dietrichson's extreme tendencies along this line, they accepted the rule with enthusiasm. The definiteness of the program appealed to the solid churchly element which was now growing in numbers and importance. His third condition, though unnecessary and trite in our day when it is quite generally acknowledged but not always observed, was of utmost importance at a time when innumerable traveling Ellingian lay preachers and sectarian "missionaries"—mostly Scandinavian converts to the Mormons, Mennonites, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians—were harassing the Norwegian Lutheran clergy as the worst foes to their own projects. Dietrichson, at this time twenty-nine years old, showed marked ability not only in garnering data from Clausen and the settlers, but also in analyzing the situation, thereby enabling himself, with his inborn military talent, to meet the situation squarely by the proper counter moves.

Having decided upon his course of action, he was not slow in executing his plans. On October 10, 1844, on the basis of his four points, he organized forty families in the eastern part of the Koshkonong settlements into a congregation. Three days later he organized thirty families in the western part of the settlement in the same way. These two congregations joined in electing Ole Knudsen Trovatten as *forsanger*[20] and eight pastor's assistants or deacons, four from East and four from West Koshkonong. In view of his more important office, the *forsanger* was bound by oath to the Ritual of the Church of Denmark and Norway, while the eight assistants, after being duly instructed as to their duties from Pontoppidan's *Collegium Pastorale,* signified by affirmation their sincere intention of fulfilling

[18] *Ibid.*, 46.
[19] *Ibid.*, 47.
[20] *Forsanger,* literally *foresinger,* one who "sings ahead." See below, 80.

these duties.[21] That Trovatten was a man of both education and consecration is seen from the fact that he was engaged to teach three months of parochial school in 1845 at a salary of ten dollars a month.

Parallel with this preparatory work at Koshkonong went the organizing activities in other settlements in Wisconsin and Illinois. As noted above, the settlers at Hamilton, Rock Prairie, Jefferson Prairie (Wisconsin), and Rock Run (Illinois) had written to Bishop Sörensen at Oslo to get a pastor.[22] To show their earnestness in the matter, they instructed their secretary, Knud Knudsen, to promise incidentals, eighty acres of land, and three hundred dollars a year for five years, a truly princely sum for these pioneers to raise. On his second visit to this settlement in the fall of 1844, Dietrichson organized them into a congregation on the basis of his four points, exactly as at Koshkonong. For the time being these were to be annexes to the congregations at Koshkonong. This arrangement lasted about a year in the case of the Luther Valley congregation in the Rock Prairie settlement. The latter congregation repeated, by a formal call to Rev. C. L. Clausen, what it virtually had asked of him orally: that he come to serve them as their resident pastor. Clausen had discouraged the settlers from calling him on his first trip to them in February, 1844, on the ground that he had been sent by T. O. Bakke to Muskego, and had referred them to the Bishop of Oslo. When, under date of December 29, 1845, he received the formal call from the Rock Prairie settlers, now duly organized by Dietrichson into the Luther Valley congregation, he accepted the call, March 9, 1846, as he despaired of being able to command the respect and obedience due him as a minister of the Gospel at Muskego.[23] The former congregation henceforth had its own pastor and, like the other congregations, grew rapidly, numbering two hundred and ninety souls by the first Sunday in Advent, 1846. It built its own church in 1846-47.[24]

While Clausen was still pastor at Muskego, he and Dietrichson organized a number of other congregations which were joined either to Koshkonong or to Muskego. Some of these were: Skoponong, Milwaukee, Rock Ground settlement in Stephenson and Winnebago Counties (Illinois), Long Prairie (Illinois), and Chicago,[25] all of which were organized within a year.

We have reserved the account of the Rock River settlement to the last, as this is interesting from the point of view of ethics as well as of method. Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson refrained from going

[21] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *op. cit.*, 47.
[22] *Ibid.*, 81.
[23] His almost heartbroken letter to Dietrichson while the latter was in Norway gives a glimpse of the great difficulties he had in enforcing the disciplinary measures which, through Dietrichson's potent influence, he deemed absolutely essential. See App. to Dietrichson, *op. cit.*
[24] H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift til Den norske Synodes Jubilaeum 1853-1903*, 34, 35.
[25] *Ibid.*, 35.

down there until toward the close of his first stay in America, because he had heard that the Norwegians at Rock River, together with the settlers at Pine Lake, had joined the Episcopal Church. Unonius, possibly himself misled because of his youth, had repeated with some success the old contention that had swept numberless Swedes and even great portions of the General Lutheran Synod [26] into the Episcopal Church: "The Episcopalian and Lutheran Churches are almost exactly the same." Though Dietrichson was not a man to be similarly misled, he still had the characteristic Lutheran view of denominational ethics, and refused to go to Rock River out of respect for the (questionable) parochial rights of the Episcopalians. Not until assured repeatedly both orally and in writing that the people had not joined, nor intended to join, the Episcopal Church, did he go down there in February, 1845. As could be expected, he thoroughly expounded the difference between the Lutheran and the Episcopalian Churches, with the result that all but four families subscribed to his four points and became an annex congregation to Koshkonong.[27]

At this point, when the settlements had accepted or were about to accept his four points, Dietrichson's work in America had actually been accomplished, since he had been called "To get information about the religious needs of the emigrated Norwegians, and to attempt to institute church order among them." Both parts of this dual program had now been carried out with a courage and insight which did this young stranger to American needs and conditions great credit. Besides organizing these congregations, he performed an enormous amount of pastoral work and, on the whole, was the spiritual *fa'r,* "fa(the)r," to the immigrants in Wisconsin and Illinois.

But he could not immediately leave these new-born spiritual organisms. Though he had seen them breathe and heard them wail, he had yet to help them to perform the sterner functions of life. Accordingly, he notified the Koshkonong congregations that his call had expired and that it was up to the congregations to decide what should be done in regard to calling and supporting a pastor in their midst. At the meeting of the congregations on February 2, 1845, the *forsanger* and the deacons were delegated to draw up the conditions upon which a pastor should be called, and to prepare a letter of call to be issued when the conditions were agreed upon by the congregation. Dietrichson took no part in the work of the committee until it became evident that they could neither agree among themselves nor get the congregation to accept any one of the various proposals.[28] With the pastor's help a document was drawn up by the above-named committee in which Dietrichson's organization of the congregation is described, adherence to the four points reaffirmed,

[26] See J. L. Neve, *A Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America,* 85.
[27] Dietrichson, *op. cit.,* 70. Unonius later moved to Chicago and finally returned to Sweden.
[28] *Reise,* 50.

and, finally, the proposed financial support of the pastor given in detail. Since these details shed some light on Norwegian Lutheran usage and upon the conditions at the time, we shall summarize them:[29] 1. The pastor is to have the use of forty acres of land, upon which the congregations shall build him a residence with one large and two small rooms and a kitchen; ten acres of the land are to be fenced and plowed. 2. For at least five years the pastor shall receive three hundred dollars, payable three times a year. 3. Those requiring special ministerial service—as at the churching of mothers, baptism of children, confirmation of the youth, solemnization of marriage, officiating at funerals—shall give the pastor whatever they deem proper. 4. Voluntary offerings shall be given the pastor on the three major church festivals: Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. The report goes on to say that the expenses accruing from these provisions shall be apportioned according to "fair share" by the "eight men elected by us for this purpose."[30] It was further decided that the congregations extend a call upon these conditions to Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson.[31] Since the catalog of virtues ascribed to Dietrichson at his call to Koshkonong is verbatim the same as that ascribed nine months later to Clausen at the latter's call to Luther Valley (December 31, 1845), the same person might have been the author of both. Most likely both were copied from some manual, possibly Pontoppidan's *Collegium Pastorale.*

More striking than the interesting deliberations of a meeting that perforce has great intrinsic interest as being the first congregational meeting of the first congregations formally organized, is the significant fact that to this document two hundred and twenty-seven men signed their names.[32] At that, some—among them a Swedish nobleman whose motion was defeated—were not willing to accept the consequences of the open discussions of a "free church" (as opposed to State Church), but left the meeting without signing their names. At the time of Dietrichson's departure for Norway in May, 1845, the Koshkonong congregations numbered five hundred and seventy-five souls. Thus the congregations, a fair beginning of seventy families at their organization on October 10-13, 1844, had grown into a powerful spiritual organization that was soon to be able to bear quite heavy burdens.

Under date of March 3, 1845, these congregations issued a call to Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, the same two hundred and twenty-

[29] *Ibid.*, 51.

[30] Are the "eight men" the deacons, or shall a second group of eight be elected? The text is not clear, but it is quite certain that Dietrichson divided the spiritual and material functions in the Spring Prairie congregation, organized in 1847, so that the deacons took charge of the former, and the trustees, or *forstandere,* took charge of the latter. He is perhaps himself not yet clear on this point. See *Reise,* 52.

[31] For the text of these conditions see *Reise,* 50.

[32] *Reise,* 52. These names are given by G. T. Flom in *A History of the Norwegian Immigration to the United States,* 314.

seven signing their names. But Dietrichson, in the loneliness of his one-roomed log hut, had begun to yearn for the comforts of "home" and, though there were many capable homemakers in Wisconsin and Illinois even in those days, it never occurred to this aristocrat that he could marry anyone who was not of his well-defined station and dignity. This meant that he had to go to Norway for a bride, as the aristocratic upper classes had not yet begun to emigrate.[33] In answer to the call, therefore, he promised that, in case no other qualified pastor could be prevailed upon to come to America in his place, he would make the proper arrangements in Norway for a long stay in America, and return to Koshkonong and serve as pastor. With these matters thus tentatively disposed of, and having arranged with Clausen to serve the congregation for the time being, he left for Norway in May, 1845.

Elling Eielsen likewise had been extremely busy in the years between 1843 and 1845. The possessor of an iron will and a constitution insensible to hardships, he set out on foot at four o'clock in the morning with his kit containing an axe and a few camping utensils slung over his back,[34] and in this fashion he traveled far and wide among the settlements. His extensive travels throughout the years took him through the Northwest States, to Missouri, and even as far as Texas.[35] Wherever he went, he conducted his ultra-informal services; and, though the settlers missed the accustomed order of the service, Eielsen brought the essence of the Gospel to many districts to which the other pastors did not penetrate. On account of his demands for a certain kind of Christianity and his rigorous requirements even in the details of demeanor in prayer and Christian conduct generally, his appeal could not reach a very wide circle. On the other hand, those he won embraced his *whole* system—Eielsen would tolerate nothing less from *ours*—with a vigor and zeal that made up in intensity what Elling lost in extensity.

Being the extreme opposite of Dietrichson in this as in so many points, Eielsen deemed it sufficient to gather *ours* (i.e. his followers) about the Word of God, without bothering about such claptrap as organization. His adherents were bound together by common interests, and whatever business they might have to transact was transacted in any sort of way. In a small group this was possible, particularly so long as all would submit to Eielsen's dictates in matters pertaining to the common weal. But Eielsen was making at this time (1843-1846) at least two converts, Paul Anderson and Ole Andrewsen, who would not submit very long to his arbitrary methods. Within a very short time this insistent demand for constitutional safeguards was destined to prevail; as yet, however, Eielsen dis-

[33] Th. Bothne, *op. cit.*, 840 ff.
[34] Bergh, *op. cit.*, 23. Bothne, *op. cit.*, 833 ff.
[35] R. B. Anderson. *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration*, 411; and E. O. Mörstad, *Elling Eielsen og den "Evangelisk-lutherske Kirke" i Amerika*, 209.

dained all this fussy machinery set up by the "learned" pastors, of whom, he was proud to say, he was not one.

While in Norway, Dietrichson traveled extensively and bespoke the cause of his American congregations most warmly. Not content with this and with the numerous articles he wrote for the secular press, he published a more pretentious volume setting forth the conditions and needs of the emigrated children of the Church of Norway. This work bore the long title: *Reise blandt de norske emigranter i "de forenede nord-amerikanske fristater."* [36] This fervent missionary appeal to the Mother Church met with some immediate response in the form of small donations; [37] but its real fruits were borne later when it brought over to America some of the most brilliant of the young Norwegian theologians. It was not to be expected that the clergy's deep-seated prejudices against the whole business of emigration should be wiped out at once. At any rate, Dietrichson's appeal in the secular press to the clergy of Norway to send one of their number over to America in his place went unheeded. Consequently, after having wooed and won a Norwegian lady of suitable rank, he returned to America in the summer of 1846. From now on, he served, not as the representative of the Church of Norway, but on a call from the Norwegian American Lutheran congregations at Koshkonong. The first step in the long march of events which resulted in the complete independence of the Norwegian American Lutheran church from the Church of Norway was taken when these congregations in America were thus left to shift for themselves. Aid was still forthcoming from Norway, to be sure, and without this aid one can only surmise what would have happened; and yet the congregations, which were forced to stand on their own feet at this time, acquired an independence in other matters also, greatly to the vexation of the Mother Church later.

Possibly it was a realization of the fact that the Norwegian American Lutheran church had to work out its own destiny that made Dietrichson take hold of the task of organizing congregations with more energy than ever before. Shortly after his return to America in the summer of 1846, he underwent a marked development in his ideas of what a congregational constitution ought to be. His activities at Spring Prairie are most illuminating on this point.

Early in January, 1847, he visited the settlers at Spring Prairie and adjacent points, and on March 27, 1847, he organized them into congregations on the basis of his four points. A little over two years later, on October 15, 1849, three congregations—Spring Prairie, Bonnet Prairie, and Norway Grove—were organized into a main, or

[36] That is: *Travels among the Norwegian Emigrants in "the United North American Free States."* This valuable source-book on early Norwegian American history was published by L. C. Kjelland, Stavanger, Norway, 1846, and reprinted by R. B. Anderson, Madison, Wis., in 1896. Quite full excerpts are found in H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift.*

[37] E. g. $30. for Trovatten for teaching three months of parochial school. See *Reise,* App.

capital, congregation for the purpose of calling a pastor. The constitution that Dietrichson on this occasion wrote for these congregations not only represents his own full-blown development, but it embraces the main elements of later congregational constitutions in the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America. A document of such great importance deserves at least careful and respectful reading:

> Prompted by a fervent longing also in this strange land to hold fast to the true saving doctrine and edifying church order of the church of our fatherland, we Norwegian settlers in and about Spring Prairie in Dane and Columbia counties in Wisconsin in North America have decided to form a Norwegian Luthern congregation, and have for that purpose in October, 1849, asked Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson to order our church affairs for us. We are thus agreed concerning the following regulations in regard to our church order:
>
> 1. The name of the congregation shall be: The Norwegian Lutheran Congregation at Spring Prairie.
>
> 2. The doctrine of the congregation shall always be that which is revealed in God's holy Word through our baptismal covenant[35] and in canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, interpreted according to our Church's Symbolical or Confessional Writings.
>
> 3. Ceremonies, or the outward acts of worship, as well as the church order in the congregation, shall be carried out according to the *Ritual of the Church of Denmark and Norway* of 1685 and according to the Altar Book prescribed by the said kingdoms, yet in such form as the changed conditions in this country may necessitate.
>
> 4. The spiritual affairs of the congregation are administered by a congregational board, consisting of the pastor's assistants in the congregation. These assistants are appointed, as often as the pastor deems it necessary, by plurality vote of the congregation members and are inducted into office by the pastor in accordance with the rules prescribed in the Church of Norway, with such modifications as the pastor may decide upon.
>
> 5. The secular affairs of the congregation are administered by the board of trustees elected by the congregation in compliance with the law of February, 1847.
>
> 6. The congregation must not call or use as pastor anyone not rightly called and ordained according to the rules prescribed by the Church of Norway.
>
> 7. The congregation is in duty bound to show their rightly called pastor attention and obedience in all things that the pastor demands and does in accordance with God's Word and our church order, and the esteem and respect due a servant of the Lord, according to the admonition of the Apostle, "Obey them that have rule over you."
>
> 8. Since we as Christians know the Lord's command, that they who preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel, and are also heartily willing to obey this Word of the Lord, we determine upon the following conditions in regard to the pastor's salary:
>
> [Litera (a), (b), (c), and (d) are repetitions of financial provisions given above, 73.]

[35] *Through our baptismal covenant* is a touch of Grundtvigianism later eradicated by Dietrichson's successors.

That we, the undersigned members of the Norwegian Lutheran Congregation at Spring Prairie, submit ourselves in every particular to the above-mentioned conditions and pledge ourselves to fulfil them, we acknowledge by signing our names or by permitting them to be signed.

The Norwegian Lutheran Congregation at Spring Prairie in Dane and Columbia Counties in the State of Wisconsin in North America, the 15th day of October, 1849.[39]

This document was signed by one hundred and forty-three men.

This constitution has both its strong and its weak points. In regard to its doctrinal position, it is remarkably complete, being placed squarely upon the Word of God and the Confessional Writings of the Lutheran Church. It designated the name of the congregation and provided officials for the execution of its corporate will. Proper restrictions were made in regard to the calling of the pastor, with rules and regulations for his conduct of worship and the performance of the other duties of his office. The congregation is duly reminded of its duty to obey the pastor when he speaks in virtue of his office, and to provide him a decent living. On the other hand, the constitution was tinged with Grundtvigianism: it did not provide for congregational meetings; it was not specific in regard to eligibility for membership; it did not specify how discipline was to be carried out; nor did it anticipate what should be done with the corporate property of the congregation in case of a split. But what to the casual observer appears to be grave faults becomes a mere matter of refraining from repetition when we consider that nearly all of these things were provided for in Pontoppidan's *Collegium Pastorale* and the *Ritual of the Church of Denmark and Norway,* to which the pastors were bound by oath. This, of course, does not remove the stigma attached to the Grundtvigianism which Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson professed, nor does it wholly remove some of the other difficulties, for the *Ritual* and *Altar Book* were subject to change by the pastor. Further, some of the things he put into his constitution have later more appropriately been incorporated into the letter of call to the pastor. Broadly speaking, however, it may be said that the main elements of the congregational constitution were already present in the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America by 1849. Though Dietrichson's constitution underwent many changes, it served its church as a most useful basis for further development, besides standing out as a milepost which the other Norwegian Lutherans were not soon to pass. What later became the Norwegian Synod element had thus emerged past the crude foundation work into the finer complexities of organized activity. With these achievements to his credit, Dietrichson deserves to be remembered for his far-sighted provisions. This also marks the end of his real usefulness. In 1850 Dietrichson left for Norway,

[39] Text found in H. Halvorsen, *op. cit.,* 37.

never again to set foot on American soil. But we are not through with him yet by any means.

Consonant with the great advance we have witnessed in the spiritual and administrational affairs of the Lutheran Church in the years between 1843 and 1849 is the great advance of the settlers in material ways. Hand in hand with the growing population of the settlements goes a rapid development of the resources of the rich lands of Illinois and Wisconsin under the frugal, intelligent, and energetic husbandry of the Norwegian immigrants. While the vast majority of the settlers were still "newcomers," there were a few here and there who had by this time attained to the poise and dignity which is characteristic of the "old settler." Many an abjectedly poor *husmand,* who was practically a serf in Norway, was already beginning to see a return for his labors such as he, of course, never could have dreamt of in the old country. As often happens to those long held in subserviency, many of these swung from enforced subjection to brazen arrogance.

Yet it may be said of the Norwegians that they did not build themselves ceiled houses to the neglect of the House of God. On the contrary, they built the House of God almost as soon as they had provided the most scanty shelter for themselves and their families. Indeed, from the very earliest time, beginning with Eielsen's "meeting-house" to the present time, culminating in houses of worship passing—if not actually doubling and trebling—the hundred thousand dollar mark, the House of God has stood as a fair estimate of the utmost that the Norwegian Lutherans could put forth. This is the development at its best; even now, however, in many overwhelmingly Norwegian Lutheran communities the Norwegian Lutheran churches are small structures placed on bargain lots in the outskirts of the villages and cities. But the uniting of several—usually three: Hauge, Synod, and United Church—congregations into one powerful unit by the union of 1917 has brought about a most gratifying advance in late years in the erection of beautiful houses of worship.[40]

Houses of worship in the early days most certainly were in keeping with the financial capacity of the communities. While Elling Eielsen's "meeting-house" at Norway, Fox River, Illinois, was not strictly a church, it is at least to be rated as a "house of worship." This house, constructed of white oak logs in Norwegian fashion, was twenty-four feet long, sixteen feet wide and twelve feet high.[41] The lower story was divided into two rooms and fitted out for family use, while the upper story, or attic, was the "meeting-house" proper. The seats consisted of split rails, placed on blocks; light

[40] Pictures of many of these church buildings are to be found on the front page of the *Lutheran Church Herald,* official organ of "The Norwegian Lutheran Church of America," published at its Augsburg Publishing House, 425 South Fourth St., Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[41] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.,* 412. See also J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.*

was admitted through small windows. To match the sturdy and elemental physical equipment of the place, a sturdy and elemental Gospel was here preached, usually by Elling himself.

In a class with Eielsen's "meeting-house" stand Even Heg's barn at Muskego and Rev. C. L. Clausen's house at Luther Valley, where *meetinger* or *middens*[42] were held for a shorter or longer time. Though crude, these places of worship were fully up to the standards of life at the time; they were superseded even before the standards of life had improved enough to strictly warrant a very great change.

Efforts were soon made to get houses dedicated (that is, wholly set aside) as Houses of God. Already in the fall of 1843 the Muskego "congregation" decided to build a church. Even Heg gave a plot of ground on the so-called Indian Mound, into the sides of which Sören Bakke and J. Johannesen had burrowed their "dugout," and on this high spot the church was built under great difficulties.[43] Tollef Bakke of Drammen, Norway, again proved a friend in need and gave four hundred dollars, enabling the settlers to set to work in earnest upon the church building in 1844. This work called forth the finest coöperation on all sides, Rev. C. L. Clausen cutting and trimming logs with the rest.[44]

Mr. H. J. Ellertsen of Wind Lake, Wisconsin, describes this church in a letter to Prof. R. B. Anderson as follows: This church

> was built of oak logs hewed on both sides, six inches thick, and matched after the Norwegian fashion of building houses. On the inside the logs were dressed perfectly smooth and then fitted so close together that no mortar was used between them. Double doors in the front were made of black walnut. The pulpit was also made of walnut and was about seven feet from the floor. Galleries were built across the front and along both sides to about the middle of the church. These galleries were supported by six heavy columns turned out of solid walnut. In fact the church was pretty well furnished inside. The erection of the church was commenced in the spring of 1844, and the dedication took place March 13, 1845. It is undoubtedly *the first Norwegian church built in America.*[45]

This historic building was sold to a Mr. Jacobsen who used it as one of the houses on his farm, though it is hotly contended that he never used it, as has been said, for a barn.[46] After it had been thus neglected for a time it was bought by Revs. G. Hoyme and P. A. Rasmussen and placed on the campus of Luther Theological Seminary, Como and Pierce Avenues, St. Paul, Minnesota, where a protecting house was built for it.[47]

[42] Norwegian corruption of the English word "meetings," meaning the coming together for worship.

[43] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.*, 419.

[44] *Ibid.*, 421.

[45] *Ibid.*, 419.

[46] So said Hjalmar Rued Holand in his artivle, "Muskego," in *Symra*, 1907, 194.

[47] Bergh, *op. cit.*, 53.

The Muskego church was the first to be started and the first to be finished, Rev. C. L. Clausen taking it into use in the fall of 1844. But during this time Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson's two congregations at Koshkonong built each its own church on identical plans. With characteristic energy Dietrichson dedicated his houses of worship as soon as they were completed, dedicating the West church on December 19, 1844, and the East church on January 31, 1845. Clausen assisted at the dedication of the first but not of the second.[48] These churches were somewhat larger than the one at Muskego, being thirty-six feet long and twenty-eight feet wide.

Fourth in order to be built and dedicated is the church at Luther Valley, Rock County, Wisconsin. This was built also by Clausen upon his acceptance of the call to this congregation (1846-47). The furniture in this historic church is still preserved in the West church at Luther Valley. Rev. J. A. Bergh says that this sanctuary marked a great advance over the others both in size and in churchly style. The bell of this church, which is possibly the oldest among the Norwegian Lutherans, still hangs in the tower of the present Luther Valley church.[49] From this time on, churches were built at so many places that the individual building enterprises are lost sight of.

There has been repeated reference to the "church order" that Dietrichson came to introduce. Not only did he speak of this "church order" as "edifying" and "precious," but he actually sacrificed much in coming here to introduce it. But what does he mean by the "church order"?

In a general way, he must mean the ordering of congregations on the basis of the doctrine and liturgical usages of the Church of Norway. The fact that he pledged the "forsanger" at Koshkonong to the *Ritual of the Church of Denmark and Norway* bears this out. One could get the background for Dietrichson's ideas by referring to Pontoppidan's *Collegium Pastorale,* but it is much more to the point for us to examine some of the remnants of the customs still in use probably dating from these early times. These customs and usages, quaint though some of them are, have a historical as well as a liturgical interest. We shall arrange our material under a few convenient heads.

Of great subjective, and some objective, importance is the official variably known as *forsanger* (foresinger) or *klokker.*[50] Using every opportunity for magnifying their office, these men, in the days when

[48] R. B. Anderson, in passing over the clear testimony in Dietrichson, *Reise,* quotes Rev. A. Bredesen instead, and is led into the erroneous statement that Clausen assisted at both dedications. Cf. R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.,* 426 and *Reise,* 48.

[49] Bergh, *op. cit.,* 54.

[50] It would have been a rare thing to find both a *forsanger* and a *klokker* in the same congregation, though such a thing is easily conceivable. In that case the *forsanger,* as his name indicates, would lead the singing, and the *klokker* would read the opening and closing prayers and say his *Amens* at

even reed organs were extremely scarce, succeeded in commanding the respect of the elders and inspiring the superstitious awe of the youth by their affectations and by many flourishes in connection with the performance of their public duties. Not that they were personally unworthy; the contrary was almost without exception the case. As a rule, the *forsanger* had received special training in Norway for the office of teacher, and when the congregations were financially able to do so they gave the *forsanger* full-time employment as parochial school teacher, *forsanger,* and *klokker.*[51] In that event a house was built for him near the church, and although he was held in much lower esteem than the pastor, to be sure, yet he ranked high above the average layman. To qualify as *forsanger* he had to know most of the hymn tunes and be able to pick out the unfamiliar tunes on a primitive stringed instrument called *Psalmodikon.* Since he could not take this instrument to church, he had to depend on his memory for the pitch—a rather precarious performance, often bringing grief to the less gifted musicians among them. Nor was he always so certain in regard to the tempo in which the hymns were to be sung. He needed above all a "good" singing voice, not necessarily good in tone and timbre, but in force and "drowning out" qualities. It would have been presumption itself for anyone to lift a hand in church to beat the time; on the other hand, the *forsanger* was expected to lift his voice above the rest and assert his leadership, of which, by the way, he was very jealous. Though the *forsanger* could hold his own with most rival vocalists, the reed organ, even with its coy organist, proved too much for him, so that at present we have only a very few venerable representatives of this once powerful and influential class of laymen. While the *forsanger* and even the full-time religious school teacher have practically passed as a professional class, their numerous functions are now carried on, or revived, by a whole group of functionaries: for instance, the organist and choir director; the normal school graduates and college students who teach summer school; the full-time deacons, deaconesses, or other lay congregational helpers; and the prominent laymen who still function as *klokker* in many congregations. Whether this wide distribution is a loss or a gain depends on the relative worth of the incumbents of the offices in the past and the present.[52]

Baptism. Whether the *klokker* has ever had anything to do with the bell, as his name *klokker,* i.e. "bell-er" or "bell-man," seems to indicate, is more a matter of etymology than of history; in so far as we are acquainted with him in America, his official duties have nothing to do with his name.

[51] I shall refrain from mentioning the many congregations that might be cited in corroboration of this lest the idiosyncracies here mentioned might inadvertently be applied by the reader to the present venerable incumbents of the office.

[52] It appears that the problem of trained lay workers is not as new as it might seem. It is, moreover, quite possible that the *forsanger* with his multitudinous duties proved fully as useful as most of the specialized functionaries of our day.

Most intimately connected with the *forsanger* was the congregational singing. Whether from lack of rhythmic sense or from metronomic slovenliness, the Lutheran hymns, as sung in not a few Norwegian congregations even to-day, are so fearfully distorted by sagging and dragging that the musically intelligent in the younger generation claim that the old generation is "singing them out of church." While this cannot be laid entirely at the door of the *forsanger,* since this slow singing might easily be a heritage from the time when Norwegians could read only very slowly, yet the *forsanger* with his limited—or perverted—idea of hymn singing certainly must bear some of the responsibility. The musical standards of the times were not very high; hence it is quite possible that the average congregation would have resented as a disturbance any attempt to introduce such highfaluting stuff as dotted notes. Indeed, not all present-day Norwegian Lutheran organists succeed in observing the few dotted quarter notes in Lindeman's *Koralbog,* though they have the advantage of the organ; how much, then, might rightly be expected of even a lusty *forsanger?* The Lutheran Church is essentially a singing church, the people joining most heartily in the songs. What is lost in the art of rendering the tunes is gained in the understanding of the words, the singing sometimes approaching a recitative in order that the people may sink themselves thoroughly into the full meaning and spirit of the mighty Lutheran hymns. As a result, the older generation *knew* their hymns; they could quote hymns to a length and of a number that their modern critics, even among the pastors, cannot begin to duplicate.[53] Only the world's greatest hymns can stand up under such searching and intensive scrutiny of their meaning. After all, the tunes and words were to them only the forms or vehicles; with their keen spiritual perception they were not satisfied until they had grasped fully all that the text and tunes were able to convey.

Religious instruction of the young was another function linked up with the office of the *forsanger.* Eielsen had made a reprint of Pontoppidan's *Dubbelte* (i.e. dobbelte, double, large) *Explanation* (p. 41), but what more he did for the instruction of the young is uncertain. Mrs. Clausen took hold of this work after her husband's ordination and, though she was very patient and self-sacrificing in her work of love, it cannot be said that the religious school as an institution was firmly established by her efforts (p. 60). Rev. J. W.

[53] My own grandmother could quote verbatim and scrupulously correctly Luther's *Small Catechism* from cover to cover besides reciting, especially after she lost her eye-sight, hymns and devotional gems by the hour—so it seemed to my young mind. And she had not been to school a day in her life! There were numberless others in the older generation just like her on this score, as most pastors will testify. It should be possible, of course, to devise a way of retaining this most religious devotion to the text without exposing the tunes to abuse.

C. Dietrichson brought books with him from Norway,[54] and even on the boat gathered the children about him and gave them religious instruction (*Reise,* 4). No sooner had he organized the Koshkonong congregations than he engaged the *forsanger,* Ole Knudsen Trovatten, to teach parochial school for three months at a salary of ten dollars a month (p. 71). In conformity with the long cherished educational ideals of Norway (pp. 5 ff.), Dietrichson also provided secular education for the settlers by getting a public school started. Thus from the very first the Norwegian immigrants have not only most assiduously sought to inculcate the three "R's" but they have added a fourth and most important "R," namely "Religion." By enforcing according to ability strict standards for confirmation,[55] the pastor made the mastering of the fourth "R" the inescapable religious duty of every child. From this foundation work has risen a noble superstructure of higher education on a Christian basis which to-day (1926) embraces twenty institutions, at least two of which, Luther College and St. Olaf College, have won international renown and are the largest Lutheran *colleges* for *men* and for *men and women,* respectively, in America.

Indissolubly connected with Dietrichson's idea of the church and church order, was discipline. A short excerpt from his *Reise* illustrates this admirably:

> At the same time as it is certain, that in the case of many it was a sincere longing that impelled them to join the congregation, a longing that had been brought into their consciousness by the longer or shorter absence of that great good, church order, which the hope of temporal advantage induced them to leave in the homeland, yet it lies in the very nature of the case that many lip-confessors and mouth-Christians also joined, and that the congregation here as always and at all places became a net which gathered in of every kind.[56]

Very strict discipline, accordingly, was to be enforced, and to insure this the pastor was enjoined in the call from the congregation to maintain strict order in accordance with the *Ritual of the Church of Denmark and Norway.* When, therefore, a certain Halvor Pederson, after several fruitless admonitions by the pastor, persisted in his sin of drunkenness and profanity, the congregation took the matter up and excommunicated him.[57] He was assigned a certain seat in the back of the church, as the *Ritual* prescribed; but when, in a fit of drunkenness and anger, he marched up and took a seat under the

[54] *Reise,* 49. In a way, this was the beginning of the "Book Mission." In 1841 Eielsen walked to New York to have an English edition of Luther's *Small Catechism* published. A photographic reprint of this was made by Dr. O. M. Norlie in 1925. Mrs. Eielsen later became a far-famed catechist.

[55] This is fully explained above on p. 5 ff. The same demands were made in America as in Norway, although the American standards could not be so rigidly enforced in all cases.

[56] *Reise,* 56-57.

[57] *Ibid.,* 68.

pulpit, Dietrichson rebuked his effrontery by having him thrown out of church. In retaliation Pederson sued Dietrichson and the congregation for "assault and battery"—and won his case.[58] While Dietrichson could not fail to irritate a large number of people by his summary way of dealing with men, there were times, on the other hand, when possibly he had very little choice in the matter of procedure, as he was dealing with a type which understood only physical compulsion. Indeed, in 1847, the ribald element harassed and threatened the pastor and his wife so unceasingly that one hundred and twelve members, at Dietrichson's instigation, felt constrained to bring the matter to court. Again the rights of the "foreign" congregation were set aside, with the result that Dietrichson sent in his resignation to the Koshkonong congregations under date of October 23, 1847. He was, however, not relieved from his call; instead, more tolerable conditions were brought about through the pressure of public opinion, enabling him to continue his labors without any serious opposition during the remaining years of his stay in America.[59] Nor were conditions better in other places. In Chicago, Dietrichson reports, the situation was still worse; the Norwegians there were so given to drunkenness, fist-fighting, and revelry that the "Yankees" called them "the Norwegian Indians."[60] In spite of the fact that Rev. Paul Anderson's immediate parish was Chicago, he still gave as a reason for the need of the kind of work he intended to do in the Norwegian settlements with Reformed aid that the Lutheran pastors did nothing to better conditions.[61] As a matter of fact, the situation was not within the control of any race, party, or creed; before the "Indians" of all nationalities the church seemed weak and impotent. The "Norwegian Indians" were, however, as tractable as any frontier group, and quite soon settled down to useful and constructive work.

In a time when the forces of law and order were too weak to assert themselves with any great vigor, the churches—Reformed as well as Lutheran—were the real guardians of human rights and the arbiters of moral relations. The Norwegian group was naturally dominated by their own leaders, who were at this time Eielsen and Dietrichson. Both were very stern, but their constituency was accustomed to sternness both in government and in nature, and hence regarded their sternness as a mark of pastoral thoroughness.

[58] H. Pederson had hoped to embarrass Dietrichson by bringing this matter to a head just as the latter was about to leave for Norway. A Presbyterian, whose clergyman father had had a similar experience with the ribald element of the then wild West, voluntarily pleaded Dietrichson's case, saying that not only had Pederson disturbed public worship, but he had invited violence by remaining on the corporate property of the congregation after being warned to leave. The congregation, as a free institution, had a right to admit or exclude whomsoever it pleased.

[59] For Dietrichson's account of conditions see Bergh, *op. cit.*, 43.

[60] *Reise*, 89.

[61] K. C. Babcock, *The Scandinavian Element*, 117.

For the sake of completeness we must at this time also consider the "church order" from the standpoint of the conduct of public worship. This is its narrowest and most essential meaning as the high-churchly Dietrichson undoubtedly understood the term. We shall here attempt to include the quaint customs as well as those that have not materially changed in the course of the years.

First and foremost stands the pastor. Much to the disgust of Eielsen and some extreme Haugeans, who flocked to Eielsen for this reason, Dietrichson and the Synod pastors wore the Norwegian clerical garb. This consists of a black gown hanging straight from the shoulders to within a few inches of the floor. Over the gown is a stiffly padded, inch-wide, satin-covered stole, or "yoke," which hangs around the neck and down both sides of the front the full length of the gown. This stole, or "yoke," was mistakenly taken to symbolize the complete surrender ("going under the yoke") of the pastor to the sovereign will of God.[62] At the back of the neck, the stole, or "yoke," is raised somewhat so as to support the white, fluted collar or ruff. The ruff, which is three inches wide and one inch thick, is worn Sir Walter Raleigh fashion, over the pastor's ordinary wing collar, and symbolizes the purity and glory of the pastoral office. This white fluted collar with the black gown gives the pastor a worthy and dignified appearance when he approaches the Altar of God or preaches God's Word from the pulpit. On the three major church festivals and on other very important occasions, the pastor wore a white surplice over the black gown. It is not until quite recently that the Oxford, the modified-Oxford, and the gown designed by a committee of pastors of the Eastern District of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America have been regarded as proper pulpit gowns for the Norwegian Lutheran pastor.[63]

Of the services, the *höimesse* (high mass), or morning service, was overwhelmingly preferred to the more informal *aftensang* (literally even-song or vesper).[64] Even in the early days when the service was held at whatever time the travel-worn pastor arrived in the settlement, the liturgical forms of the *höimesse* were retained as far as time and circumstances would permit.[65] In the more favored congregations where there was a church building and a church bell, as was the case at Luther Valley about 1850, on special days the stately *höimesse* began on Saturday evening when the bell was tolled at

[62] If the yoke ever symbolized submission to the Danish king, this symbolism soon gave way completely to that mentioned above. As a matter of fact, the stole symbolized the ministerial authority.

[63] The constitution of Hauge's Synod, perpetuating Eielsen's prejudices, provided that "our Synod does not use the Norwegian clerical garb." But their yearly meeting of 1898 struck this paragraph (seven) from the old constitution. See Bothne, *op. cit.*, 896. Special concessions were made to the Haugeans in regard to the gown at the union in 1917.

[64] Names retained in the Church of Norway from Catholic times.

[65] Indeed, Dietrichson made a point of this, that he brought the forms of the Church of Norway to the settlers.

five, or at sundown in the country congregations. On Sunday morning, the *kirkevärge,* or the church-warden, tolled the bell at three separate half-hour intervals. At the third tolling of the bell, the people quietly took their places in church, the men on the right, and the women on the left. The pastor meanwhile having proceeded to the altar, the service was formally opened by the three concluding taps of the bell, whereby the Holy Trinity is symbolically invoked. The *klokker,* or sexton, who was usually also *forsanger,* or precentor, stepped with great dignity to the chancel and read the opening prayer, which prayer for this reason was called *klokker bön* (bön-prayer), even when read by the pastor. The pastor, who had knelt before the altar during the opening prayer, rose and faced the altar during the singing of the first hymn by the congregation under the vocal leadership of the *forsanger,* who was held responsible for the pitch of the tune as well as its proper singing. The hymn sung, the pastor turned to the congregation and, after the proper pastoral salutations and congregational responses, chanted the *Collect for the Day* and read the *Epistle for the Day,* the congregation standing meanwhile. After a second hymn, the pastor read the *Gospel for the Day.*[66] The congregation, having risen to hear the Gospel lesson, remained standing while the *Creed* was repeated in unison by pastor and congregation. The congregation again sang a hymn, at the concluding words of which the pastor mounted the pulpit and, after three taps of the bell,[67] offered a free prayer, usually along the general lines of his sermon. He then read his text to the risen congregation and preached his sermon, the sermon culminating in the *Lesser Gloria.*[68] Thereupon the pastor read, while yet in the pulpit, the *General Prayer,* in which are remembered the government of the United States, the sick, the fatherless, other right-believing denominations, and those who suffer for the sake of Christ's name. This was concluded with the *Lord's Prayer,* and after the announcements were made the congregation rose to receive the *Apostolic Benediction.* The congregation then sang another hymn. If there were no Baptism nor Holy Communion, the pastor chanted, with the proper salutations and responses, the *Collect for the Word* and the *Aaronitic Blessing.* Then followed the fifth, and closing, hymn, whereupon the *klokker*

[66] Two series of texts were later added to the first. The second series was first used on the first Sunday in Advent, 1887; the third series was taken into use on the first Sunday in Advent, 1888. In Dietrichson's time there was only one series of texts.

[67] This was not used in all communities. Theoretically the ringing followed the singing of the Gospel at the Altar. (See *Danmarks og Norges Kirke-Ritual* (Christiania, 1883), 12.)

[68] This begins "Glory be to the Father," etc. For the Lutheran service among the Norwegians in America, its meaning and symbolism, see O. E. Brandt, *Notes on Pastoral Theology,* in manuscript, and E. Kr. Johnsen, *I Kirke.* For the general Lutheran service see C. F. W. Walther, *Americanisch-Lutherische Pastoraltheologie* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1875), and G. H. Gerberding, *The Lutheran Pastor.* But we are here more interested in some of the quaint old customs.

read the closing prayer from the chancel, the pastor kneeling meanwhile.

Some details are necessary to fill out this sketchy picture of the "church order." Baptism is an integral part of the Lutheran service. The font is placed at the worshiper's left and the pulpit at his right as he faces the altar, which is in the center. After the hymn at the close of the sermon the first verse of the baptismal hymn was sung, during which the child was brought forward by the godmother and the sponsors. After the reading of the baptismal formula, in which Bible passages are quoted to explain the nature and regenerating power of Baptism, the child is baptized by "sprinkling" into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In early times the *forsanger* assisted by certain responses.[69]

The Lord's Supper, though theoretically a part of every Lutheran service and to be administered at any church service at the demand of five, was usually administered at stated seasons of the year. Rev. C. L. Clausen, at the suggestion of Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, insisted that the people of Muskego announce themselves for Communion on Saturdays in order to give time for a proper confessional and also to avoid possible embarrassment in case some one had to be denied Communion on account of his sinful life.[70] At those stated seasons, the whole service was dedicated to the intent and meaning of the Communion. The communicants knelt at the circular altar-railing when absolved and communed by the pastor. Non-members, unbaptized adults, and the unconfirmed were not admitted to Communion, however worthy they otherwise might be. Both sexes communed at the same time, the men kneeling at the right half of the railing and the women at the left half.

The central and most important part of the Lutheran service was the sermon.[71] The pastor was expected to preach on the text for the day, thereby assuring the churchgoers that he would, in the course of the year, touch upon all the cardinal points in the order of salvation. Besides saving the pastor the time and worry incident to looking for texts, this enabled the worshiper to read the text at home and, as many pious members did, to meditate upon it and pray for the Spirit of God to enlighten both himself and his pastor in regard to the truths of the text. In the Synod the emphasis in the sermons was laid on pure doctrine and holy lives; in the Haugean circles the emphasis was more especially on conversion and sanctification.

The collection of money in church was distasteful to these children

[69] The Franckean-Lutheran, Paul Anderson, in *Nordlyset* for April 12, 1849, attacks some of the customs used at Baptism by the Norwegian Lutheran clergy "as ceremonial witchcraft" and finds fault particularly with the use of the *Apostles' Creed* and sponsors in connection with this rite. See J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.*, 51.

[70] This called forth a storm of protest and was one of the reasons why Clausen left Muskego. See *Reise*, App.

[71] O. E. Brandt, *Homiletics Notes.*

of the State Church. Since the local and synodical treasuries had been filled by taxation in Norway, it easily became "beggary" when the pastor and his treasurers became insistent in regard to "voluntary" donations in "free" America. And yet these people contributed in proportion to their means sums that would shame all but the most liberal givers in our day. While this money was given "to the Lord and the extension of his Kingdom," the House of God was not the place to carry on these financial transactions. Special meetings had to be called for this, and while these meetings were held in the church building as a rule—the convenient church basements and parish houses had not yet been "invented"—a distinction was drawn between the elevated and supramundane *höimesse* and the so-called "congregational business meeting." While it took a generation or two before these people "felt right" about combining the *"höimesse"* and the ordinary Sunday offering, it was recognized more and more that money placed upon the Altar of the Lord and dedicated to Him from Sunday to Sunday is not necessarily such an "unclean thing" that it destroys the sanctity of worship. The Norwegian Lutherans have made great strides in the matter of contributions to the church in late years.

CHAPTER V

OUTLOOK—EIELSEN ORGANIZES HIS FORCES

We have traced Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson's development of the congregational organization up to his departure in 1850. In the meantime, we have been forced to leave out of account several other events of great importance that were taking place at this time. True, we mentioned something about Elling Eielsen's work between 1843 and 1845, but it was in 1846 that his work assumed a more historic character, as it was then that he, who cared nothing for constitutions, protocols, and deliberative assemblies, consented to introduce all these things into his group. Before we take up this in detail, we need to take an inventory of matters as they stood in the Eielsen camp at the beginning of 1846 as compared to Dietrichson's camp at about the same time—the middle of the summer of the same year when Dietrichson returned from Norway.

With no great amount of organization even in Dietrichson's congregations at the beginning of 1846, the whole Norwegian American situation really hung in the balance, depending on the ability of either, or both, of these strong leaders to induce the settlers to accept their personal leadership. The preference of the settlers was naturally first of all for the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America as such, and then, more specifically, for one of these two contending factions. Some few, it is true, in their undue haste to become "Americanized," turned their backs upon everything "foreign," in the mistaken notion that a church speaking a foreign language cannot at the same time be intensely loyal to America and her institutions. These, whose chief endeavor it was to "Americanize" the church, were soon to get their spokesmen within the Norwegian Lutheran Church; but at the time under consideration there were only two chief opposing forces, headed by Eielsen on the one hand and Dietrichson on the other. Clausen accepted Dietrichson's leadership.

As to method, Dietrichson and Eielsen were diametrical opposites in regard to their theories of the Church and who should belong to it, while they were fundamentally agreed both as to the ultimate and the proximate aims of the Church. The ultimate aim of the Church was, of course, to save sinners; the proximate aim, to train the converted sinners for their eternal goal by exercising them in the Christian virtues, such as obedience, self-restraint, and a zealous regard for the true faith. Both, of course, laid a reasonable emphasis on Christian

charity and forgiveness. On the negative side—and this was the most prominent—they both attacked the vices that were common, particularly drunkenness and brawling.

While moral issues and church discipline received some attention, they nevertheless played only a relatively minor rôle in determining the course that the well-poised forces of Norwegian American Lutheranism should take. Although the settlers sometimes were inordinate and on occasion gave their passions free rein in moments of relaxation and recreation, they ordinarily had such a great measure of self-restraint and wholesome respect for constituted authority that no severe criticisms have been raised against the morality of the rank and file of the Norwegians.[1] Neither Eielsen nor Dietrichson wished to go counter to the well-established ideas of the settlers in regard to order and good citizenship even in this "free" country.

The determining factor in Norwegian American church life is by all odds the religious one. The change from the life in the chary mountain valleys in Norway to life in the best agricultural lands of the Middle West was not so great as it might at first seem, since the settlers suffered hardships in America that far exceeded anything any of them—excepting possibly the Lofoten fishermen—had ever suffered in Norway. A people who contended with such things as digging out ("grubbing") obstinate tree-stumps, making rail fences, building houses of logs, wading waist-deep in fog-drenched grass to round up their stock, hauling produce a hundred miles to market in a *kubberulle*[2] drawn by slow oxen, would naturally not hesitate to grapple with even the most solid religious problems.

Hans Nielsen Hauge had demonstrated that the Gospel could be vitalized and brought very near to the rugged Norsemen in their homes among the mountains in Norway by one who fully understood their gnarled natures. By throwing the solemn voice of the Bible, the postils, and the hymn-books against the Norwegian mountains, these mountains, instead of being merely pitiless monsters grinding the faces of the people and crushing their legitimate aspirations, became vibrant with religious fervor and reverberated in soulful tones the stirring Gospel of present hope and future salvation. Hauge had given expression as truly as any seer of God to that particular nuance of the Gospel which touched the innermost recesses of the Norwegian soul, and his mighty words reëcho to this day not only among the hills of Norway, but also on the prairies of the American Mid-West.

There was a strong undertone of Law—too much of it, some would say—but shaded into it, and standing in bold, yet harmonious,

[1] Their record for sobriety and good citizenship is unequaled. See G. T. Flom, *A History of the Norwegian Immigration to the U. S.*, 22 ff.

[2] A crude home-made wagon made of wood. Round logs cut into suitable thicknesses with a place for wooden axles through the center served as wheels. These were connected with the proper couplings and on this were placed bolsters and a wagon box of logs. A *kubberulle* is on display in the Luther College Museum, Decorah, Iowa.

relief, was a full-toned Gospel which reassured and comforted the terror-stricken sinner. The dominant tones in the grand chord of life which Hauge struck for all Norway were a full-souled Christian forbearance and a great-souled spirit of forgiveness. On all sides there blossomed forth a genuine piety among the masses, and spiritual forces were brought into existence among the lay people that could be led, but not suppressed, by the clergy. The problem confronting any leader of Norwegian American Lutheranism at this time was not so much how he should awaken religious life—that was necessary, too, of course—but more how he might capitalize and guide the strong and fervent religious life of the people. Both camps of Norwegian American Lutherans held strategic points in this warfare in which church expansion played fully as important a part as spiritual expansion, but neither was as yet actually master of the situation.

Elling Eielsen really held the strongest position, for he frankly claimed to be the only true representative and exponent of Haugeanism in America. But compared to the master, Eielsen was crude and rough-handed. How much of the real Hauge he had been able to grasp in his second-hand connection with this many-sided man can only be surmised; at any rate, a comparison between Hauge and Eielsen forces us to conclude that much had been lost in transit between the mild and forgiving Hauge and the severe and stern Eielsen. If Eielsen ever had grasped the meaning and secret of Hauge, he certainly was not able to reproduce fully the marvelously fine and sweet blend of Law and Gospel which Luther says can be found only in a true doctor of theology. Eielsen's nature was able to sense only the more conspicuous elements of the Law and the Gospel. Since the carnal mind by its natural powers partially understands the Law, but is unable to understand the Gospel, it was natural that Eielsen, crude artisan though he was, should be able to make good in the popular mind his claim to being Hauge's representative in America, for had not Hauge also preached a relentless and damning Law? This stood out; but his warm preaching of the Gospel was not so vividly kept in mind by the masses, who were not always spiritually qualified to receive the things of the Spirit. The name of Hauge had as tremendous an appeal on American soil as it had had on Norwegian soil; and since the immigrant retained the impressions that had last crowded into his mind when he left Norway, he generally sided with the friends of Hauge against his "persecutors," the clergy. Thus, had he been a thorough representative of the cause he professed to carry forward, Eielsen could have swept everything before him and deflected the current of thought and emotion into the somewhat narrow channel of Ellingianism.

Dietrichson, on the other hand, was equally unqualified to win general adherence. Reared in a home where the rights of the upper classes were jealously upheld against all opposition, be it from civil reformers as from Wergeland or from religious reformers as, for

instance, the Quakers and the Haugeans, it was not surprising that he should be the apostle of authority and order. Dietrichson did show a remarkable adaptation in regard to the organizational situation in the Lutheran Church of America, insofar as he granted his *forsanger* and other assistants possibly more responsibilities than were given laymen in Norway up to that time. Still these concessions to the "free" American spirit were counterbalanced by a high churchism and an aristocratic, almost autocratic, bearing that was bound to have an irritating effect upon the many lay "barons" who had held undisputed sway in their little valleys up in the Norwegian mountains.

Besides these natural and inbred aristocratic tendencies, Dietrichson looked upon himself as the proponent of Grundtvigianism as it was still favorably known at the time of his departure for America in 1844. Grundtvigianism had its chief strength among the laity in Denmark; but in Norway it had taken a different turn and become mainly an academic awakening among the pastors, who, in turn, carried it to the people. The fact that the university and the young pastors sponsored Grundtvigianism was in itself a challenge to the lay Haugean movement, which was propagated almost altogether by lay preachers. Moreover, the Grundtvigian movement emphasized the Sacraments as Means of Grace, whereas the Haugeans emphasized conversion and a personal relation to the Savior to the extent that they were in danger of losing sight of the inherent power of the Means of Grace. Add to this the bitter social and political struggles which were the last impressions of the emigrants from 1836 onward, and one can easily understand that Dietrichson was not in a position to attract the more extreme Haugeans.

Nor was he the man to bridge the gulf between lay and academic Christianity on American soil.[3] In the picture of Norwegian church life that Dietrichson retained from the time of his emigration, lay Haugeanism and academic Grundtvigianism were at swords' points, with the theological faculty at Christiania of those days too weak to form a synthesis, as did their successors Johnson and Caspari, out of the antithetic forces. While Dietrichson lent himself most willingly to serve as the extreme pole of high-churchism, Eielsen with equal readiness had put himself from the very first at the extreme pole of low-churchism. Since no way was as yet devised of bridging the gulf between them, there could be no chance for coöperation between these two, who were equally headstrong and equally certain they were right even to the least detail. Each in his stubborn way set to work, Dietrichson undertaking to work from the top down, and Eielsen from the bottom up, with the distance between them still so great that they were not seriously challenged by the urge of cooperation.

Dietrichson had had considerable success at first, possibly because the less attractive traits of his character had not yet become manifest.

[3] See above, 12 ff.

Though his system was broad enough to accommodate the whole of Norwegian American Lutheranism, his personality soon became a disturbing and retarding factor. Fortunately for his cause, his more eirenic colleague, Rev. C. L. Clausen, served as a counterpoise and added the warm human element necessary for keeping the system from becoming odious. The situation was materially relieved in the same direction by the advent in 1848 of Rev. Hans Andreas Stub from Norway, to fill the parish left vacant at Muskego by the removal of Clausen to Luther Valley in 1847.

Rev. H. A. Stub descended from a very notable family of pastors and bishops in Norway, and at the age of fifteen had received his first impression of America.[4] At that time his father came home to his parsonage and told his family that some of the best members of his parish were emigrating to the wild country called America, where there were fierce Indians.[5] Young Stub shared the horrors of the rest; nevertheless, when he heard, at his graduation from the theological seminary at Christiania, of the plight in which the Muskego settlers were placed at Clausen's removal, he laid the matter before his betrothed and together they decided to go to Muskego. They were married, and in a very few days the groom set out on the arduous journey to Christiania to arrange for his ordination to the holy ministry. After a touching farewell with relatives and friends, many of whom regarded emigration as equivalent to an untimely burial because of their vague notions about robbers, rattlesnakes, and Indians in America, they boarded ship at Bergen in April, 1848, and nine weeks later, on July 1st, landed in New York, in time to be thoroughly frightened by the wild "Fourth" in the great metropolis. After the usual hardships they arrived at Muskego, where Even Heg very coolly received them into his "hotel." Heg had had some unpleasantness with Dietrichson, and since Stub came in response to a call sent at the instance of Dietrichson, Heg—who with Reymert had not signed the call—thought that Stub would continue Dietrichson's lordly rule over the congregations. Before retiring that night, however, Stub succeeded in dispelling Heg's misgivings and the latter became his staunch friend thenceforth.

Stub preached his first sermon on July 17 and, after a visit to Dietrichson at Koshkonong, took hold of his work with vigor. He was immediately "swamped" by requests from settlers far and near to come to preach for them, and in spite of the difficulty of travel he managed to serve such widely separated points as Yorkville, Milwaukee, Port Washington, Sackville, and Port Julio, going northward by boat to Manitowoc, Gjerpen and Valders, up to Green Bay and outlying districts in the far North; south again to Rock River, Pine Lake and neighboring places, west to Skoponong,

[4] See H. G. Stub, "Fra fars og mors liv," in *Symra*, 1907, 18 ff.

[5] This was at Samnanger. When Stub came to America he served some of the people—among them Mons Aadland—whom his father had vainly tried to dissuade from emigrating to this "wild land."

Whitewater, Sugar Creek, Blue Mounds, and Dodgeville, and to Wiota and neighboring places.[6] Upon receiving a most urgent invitation, he went to Chicago and, besides performing many strictly ministerial functions, was called upon, as the "bishop" of Muskego, to sit in judgment between Paul Anderson's parishioners and their pastor, whom they openly accused of not being a Lutheran. Anderson's only reply, it was said, was that he owned the church, and if they did not keep quiet he would send for the police and oust all of them. If Dietrichson had been there instead of Stub he would have forced Anderson to make good his threat. Stub, however, quietly withdrew and at a later meeting in his hotel rooms arranged to have the objectors served by pastors in whom they had confidence.

In passing, we have brought out two incidents that illustrate the tact and poise of Rev. H. A. Stub. He won Even Heg over and made him his friend; he retired with dignity from the meeting in Chicago. Stub has been somewhat fittingly called the St. John of the pioneer church. And the church needed above all an apostle of love at this time. He combined the learning and thorough grounding in the fundamentals of Lutheranism that characterized Dietrichson with the democracy and tact that characterized Clausen. In enduring and persevering zeal he was the equal of both. Dietrichson's zeal was expansive but repelling; Stub's zeal was intensive and attractive. Clausen's zeal was genuine enough, but his poor health combined with the feeling that he had not been adequately trained for the ministry and the fact that he had not been ordained by a bishop had its psychological effect, not least upon Clausen himself. Stub was, therefore, a most valuable accession to the Dietrichson party. But even his somewhat polished, peace-loving, and friendly manner was not sufficient to bridge the gulf that Dietrichson constantly was making wider between the "State Church pastors" and the intelligent laymen. In all his work Stub was ably assisted by his altogether lovely and devoted wife, Ingeborg Stub.[7]

That which created problems was the fact that Stub had certain Grundtvigian tendencies in regard to the Church, the *Apostolic Creed,* and the conversion of the heathen after death, and that these ideas were hotly attacked by Eielsen. Stub, in turn, criticized Eielsen very severely. Possibly Eielsen did not altogether deserve this, though it is significant that he succeeded in arousing bitter enmities in quite a few quarters. These Vikings of the North did not mince matters in their controversies with each other, and their zeal for the pure doctrine was possibly mixed with less ideal elements. At any rate, the struggle between the Dietrichson faction and Eielsen did

[6] H. G. Stub, *op. cit.*

[7] For a beautiful tribute to her see *Bedstemor* (Grandma), written by Valborg Hovind Stub at Paris, 1889, and published in *Amerika,* March 16, 1899. This was added to H. G. Stub, "Fra fars og mors liv," in *Symra,* Decorah, Iowa, 1907, 37 ff.

not in any measure abate; and it takes two sides to have a conflict.

During this time from 1846 and on, Eielsen had been forced, at least partially, to adapt himself to the changing spirit that was making itself felt in Norwegian Lutheran circles in America.

Eielsen, in his travels, came into contact with two young men, Paul Anderson and Ole Andrewsen, of whom he evidently expected help in the field which was now fast getting too large for him. Of Paul Anderson he had good reason to expect much. Brohaugh and Eisteinsen in their book, *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed,* make it appear that Elling Eielsen encouraged the hopeful young man to study.[8] This, however, is strongly denied by Rev. O. J. Hatlestad,[9] who says that Eielsen at this time did not persuade Anderson or anyone else to go to school, but that he urged Anderson in particular not to do so, saying that it was difficult for one who studies to preserve the simplicity of his Christian faith. Paul Anderson, however, followed his own inclinations in the matter and received instruction from a Presbyterian clergyman, the Rev. Lemuel Hall, and was by him sent to the newly established Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin. Here he imbibed certain new ideas that were bound to give him trouble with Eielsen. Over against the ultra-Norwegian attitude of Eielsen—and the other pastors, for that matter—Paul Anderson took a position that could not but seem radically "Yankee" to the Norwegian pastors. Neither Eielsen nor his countrymen as a whole were ready for this "Yankee" program, though there were those then as now who, after but a very short stay in this country, were so "Americanized" that they had completely forgotten both their ancestry and their mother tongue. It may be that Paul Anderson did not advocate this violent cutting away from the ancestral moorings,[10] though he protested most vigorously against Eielsen's "Norwegian" attitude. At any rate, Eielsen regarded him as a dangerous person who tried not only to do away with Norwegianism, but also—and that was really serious—with some of the distinctly Lutheran doctrines and usages. On March 6, 1848, Anderson is supposed to have written a letter from Rockport[11] in which he declared the Ritual of the Norwegian Lutheran Church to be "contrary to the Word of God," to be "aristocratic and tyrannical," and that "no one in the evangelical church—except the Catholics—believes

[8] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed,* 74.

[9] O. J. Hatlestad, *Historiske Meddelelser,* 56. Rev. Hatlestad is very likely the "H" who contributed the biography of Anderson in J. C. Jensson, *American Lutheran Biographies,* 25-27.

[10] For this attitude see I. B. Torrison, "Norskarbeidet og kirken," in *Symra,* 1913, 49, 110. That Anderson went to greater lengths in his youth than he did in his later years cannot be doubted.

[11] O. J. Hatlestad denies that Anderson ever did write this letter, but whether he wrote it or not the result is the same, since Eielsen never thought otherwise. He said virtually the same things later and for this there was no excuse.

that Original Sin is damnable, or that Baptism is conversion (!) or the new birth." [12] In the last statement he attacked doctrines that are distinctly and definitely taught in the *Augsburg Confession,* to which all Lutherans must subscribe. At this time there can be very little doubt that Paul Anderson was a fiery and radical reformer who certainly wanted to be a Lutheran,[13] yet had very vague conceptions of the Lutheran doctrine. On January 6, 1848, in conjunction with Even Heg, he had visited Chicago and begun work which resulted in the organization of the first Norwegian Lutheran congregation in Chicago, February 14, 1848. After being ordained by a Franckean Synod pastor, he began work in this congregation, using the English as well as the Norwegian language. His work here grew to great proportions during his pastorate of thirteen years. On account of illness he resigned, but after a period of rest in Norway and elsewhere he took up again his work in the pastorate, this time in Milwaukee, where he stayed for a few years uneil he retired to his son's ranch in Colorado, where he died in 1891. This man, then, gave promise of becoming a very valuable helper to Eielsen in Eielsen's rapidly growing field of activity.

Of course, Paul Anderson and his young colleague, Ole Andrewsen, had observed the work of organization carried on by Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson up to his departure for Norway in 1845, and they became ever more insistent that Eielsen at least organize his congregations. But Eielsen, as we have said, cared very little for protocols and documents, since to his direct mind these were merely time-wasting devices. Quite characteristic of his attitude is the statement he is alleged at one time to have made when there was a question about keeping the minutes of a meeting: "I have nowhere read that Christ kept a protocol when he traveled about and conducted meetings for the people." [14] Imperfectly educated himself, he was frankly suspicious of the "learned" pastors and all the "learned" apparatus. But the idea of some kind of a church meeting would not down, and finally Eielsen, who was somewhat considerate of his friends, agreed to issue a call for the meeting.

Just what was done at the resultant meeting held in 1846 is uncertain, as no such formal thing as a protocol seems to have been kept. It appears, however, that Ole Andrewsen, now (1846) ordained, must have been a sort of an amanuensis to Eielsen, who dictated while Andrewsen wrote.[15] Paul Anderson, who at this time was attending school at Beloit, Wisconsin, also took part in the meeting. The first documentary evidence we have of what took

[12] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *op. cit.,* 76.
[13] O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 48 ff., where Paul Anderson defends himself against the charges that he was not a good Lutheran by quoting Dr. Reynolds and Dr. Passavant.
[14] Th. Bothne, "Eielsen," in *Kort Udsigt,* 834.
[15] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *op. cit.,* 75.

place is a letter signed by O. Andrewsen published in *Nordlyset* for September 7, 1848. The letter reads:

> Jeff. Prairie, Rock Co., Aug. 24, 1848.
>
> Be it hereby known to the evangelical Lutheran church, which was organized April 13 and 14, 1846, by representatives of the people in convention, that the annual meeting, specified in the constitution, convenes the 29th of September, next (St. Michael's Day) in Middle Point, La Salle County, Illinois, to take under advisement the church's future needs. The various churches are requested to send such representatives as are elected by a majority vote, and not by encouragement of a single person. Likewise, that other individuals, of other Lutheran synods, are free to meet and offer resolutions, but have no right to vote.
>
> By agreement,
>
> Respectfully yours,
>
> *O. Andrewsen.*[16]

This letter, of course, points to a meeting to be held on September 29, 1848, which we shall presently consider. But first we must examine the letter for whatever light it may throw on the meeting that was held in 1846 and on what this may have done in an organizational way. We shall arrange our observations under a few numbered heads.

1. The date is very definitely stated as being April 13-14, 1846. According to the secretary, some sort of a meeting must have been held on those days.

2. An "evangelical Lutheran church" must have been organized "by representatives of the people in convention." If this "evangelical Lutheran church" be a proper name, the name was, at any rate, in 1850 expanded to read: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church on Jefferson Prairie, etc., in North America." This was again contracted into: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," or simply: "Eielsen's Synod," or "Eielsen's Friends." Was this "evangelical Lutheran church" the same as the church that went under the other names?

3. The secretary mentions that a constitution had been drawn up and specifically states one of its provisions: That an annual meeting should be held. If it be true that the words "evangelical Lutheran church" constitute a proper name—which is possible—and that provision was made for regular meetings, we certainly have two very definite elements of a properly formulated constitution. The secretary's statements on these points are plain, and the secretary would hardly make loose statements about a convention that was held only two years earlier and therefore was fresh in the minds of all concerned. Rev. J. A. Bergh,[17] however, doubts the secretary's plain statement on the point of the constitution providing for

[16] Text in Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *op. cit.*, 79.
[17] *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika*, 49.

a general meeting on the grounds that nothing is mentioned about this in the *Old Constitution,* which was put into final form in 1850. Indeed, a difficulty exists here, but a historian can hardly throw out the only documentary evidence he has simply because it does not conform to a more or less accepted view of the origin of Eielsen's constitution. Rather than doubt Andrewsen's plain statement about a very recent convention, one must even go so far as to say that the constitution of 1846 was so thoroughly revised that very little of it entered into Eielsen's *Old Constitution.* Several things indicate that this is actually the fact. We have noted that there was a hint of a name in the constitution of 1846; there was nothing of the kind in Eielsen's *Old Constitution.* We have noted that synodical conventions were provided for in the constitution of 1846; there was no provision of this kind in the *Old Constitution.* There was provision for orderly representation in the constitution of 1846; no such provision was made in the *Old Constitution.* Besides this, the internal evidence indicates that the bulk of the *Old Constitution* was written certainly not until late in 1848 or, more reasonably, in 1849 or 1850. There are, for instance, very pointed references to Rev. H. A. Stub's *Wexelsism,*[18] an issue that must perforce have arisen only after Stub's arrival in America in 1848. Other references to issues that came to the fore not much earlier than 1850 will be pointed out in connection with the *Old Constitution;* hence we need only refer to these elements now. All the evidence, then, both from Andrewsen's letter, from the constitution of 1846 contrasted with the *Old Constitution,* and from the internal evidence in the *Old Constitution* itself, indicates quite clearly that such a radical difference existed between the constitution of 1846 and the *Old Constitution* of 1850 that there is good reason to doubt that they are the same document. No premium should be put on Eielsen's stubborn disregard of protocols or other means of preserving the history of his church. In the absence of complete records, the historian must draw conclusions that do not conflict with the documents in the case. Andrewsen's statement that a constitution with certain specific provisions had been drawn up in 1846 must therefore stand, as Andrewsen was recording events which were very fresh in his memory.

4. Provision was made for orderly representation. Andrewsen's very pointed statement that "the various churches are requested to send such representatives as are elected by a majority vote, and not by encouragement of a single person," indicated that abuses on this score had already crept in. Whether this points back to the meeting of 1846 or whether there had been a meeting in 1847 at which "a single person" had dictated who should represent the congregations, of course, is open to conjecture. Perhaps it was merely intended as a safeguard against possible abuses in connection with

[18] Teachings of Wexels who wrote an *Explanation* in which, among other things, he taught conversion after death. This *Explanation* rivaled Pontoppidan's for a time.

the meeting in 1848. At any rate, there can be no doubt as to who that "certain person" was, the letter breathing a profound distrust of Eielsen's capacity for observing the proprieties connected with free representative church government. Subsequent events showed that the secretary's distrust was not unfounded, as Eielsen unwittingly infringed in a most despotic fashion upon the inherent rights of others, driving all but the most submissive out of his synod. To Eielsen, the deliberative, hence slow-going, method of reaching conclusions in an assembly was as irksome as it was useless. As for him, he laid down the law to the meeting very emphatically, clinched his argument by clinching his fist, and when he had thus "settled" the question, took his hat and walked out.[19] That others who had met to counsel with each other were not disposed to consider the questions "settled" offended Eielsen very much. Possibly it was because Paul Anderson and Ole Andrewsen had tried to safeguard their rights by inserting into the constitution such matters as a name for the church body, time of meeting, representation, and so on—elements Paul Anderson might have gotten from the deliberative assemblies at Beloit College which he was attending—that Eielsen broke with these men in 1848, and utterly rejected the constitution in which these elements appeared in favor of the *Old Constitution* of 1850. Other considerations also entered in later, but the mere presumption of Anderson and Andrewsen in making suggestions at this time and, above all, of holding Eielsen himself to the constitution, was enough to arouse his suspicions that they were not otherwise "sound." Whatever defects the alleged constitution of 1846 may have had, there were no "foreign" elements in the *Old Constitution* of 1850; indeed, as we shall see later, this was so thoroughly Ellingian that it could well have been Eielsen's single sermon transcribed as a homily for the edification of coming generations. Unfortunately, its dividing powers exceeded its powers of edification.

After thus carefully examining Ole Andrewsen's letter, we conclude that unquestionably a meeting was held on April 13-14, 1846, and that evidently an "evangelical Lutheran church" was organized at this meeting by duly constituted representatives to the meeting. In the constitution drawn up at this meeting, certain very specific provisions were made for annual meetings, orderly representation, advisory membership, and possibly a name. What else took place we do not know except that Andrewsen wrote and Eielsen dictated. From this letter and from subsequent events we might infer that Andrewsen and Paul Anderson gave Eielsen somewhat of a free hand in the meeting of 1846. Yet these men—and Paul Anderson especially—succeeded in inserting certain obvious provisions to give the document the semblance of a constitution. In this Eielsen probably concurred as an indulgent concession to his two young friends,

[19] J. A. Bergh, *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika*, 50, describes Eielsen's summary way of stating his case and then leaving.

though he had little sympathy with new-fangled, formal things. But when these men played him false, as he thought, in 1848, he promptly tried to expurgate from the constitution of 1846 all these suspicious and troublesome provisions. In the process of revision the constitution of 1846 was practically destroyed, and an entirely new, purely Ellingian, document was produced, which later received the name the *Old Constitution.*

As intimated, this, of course, seriously affects the questions of the age of the synod which Eielsen organized. If the constitution of 1846 was set aside by Eielsen and his friends in favor of the *Old Constitution* of 1850, then this radical revision, which cannot at all be classed as a case of amending the constitution of 1846, must be reckoned as a reorganization. In that case, *The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America* must date from 1850 instead of 1846. Under about the same circumstances, the Norwegian Synod, which was organized in 1851, and reorganized in 1853, dates its existence, not from 1851, but from 1853. In any event, Eielsen's Synod is the oldest Norwegian Lutheran synod in America.

Out of these obscure transactions of 1846 emerges this clean-cut and well-defined thought that Eielsen and his friends did not choose to become a part of Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson's as yet roughly outlined system, but that they were absolutely and definitely committed to a separate and independent corporate existence. It does not appear, however, that Eielsen gave the matter of congregational organization much thought at any time; he possibly intended that his constitution should serve both for congregational and synodical organizations, though presently he drew up a congregational constitution.

We are now ready to take up the main point in Ole Andrewsen's letter, namely, that the secretary issued a call for a meeting of Eielsen's church body in accordance with the constitution of 1846, this meeting to be held at Middle Point, Fox River, Illinois, September 29, 1848. Two things needed attention: 1. Complaints against Eielsen. 2. Entrance into the Franckean Synod.

When the meeting of 1848 was convened, Paul Anderson, who had lately been ordained, was elected president, and Ole Andrewsen secretary. The secretary now read a long list of charges against Eielsen, comprising "everything that he here and there has been accused of." Eielsen asked for the right accorded even criminals to have time to prepare a defense. To this the chairman replied that "the matter is so clear, the proofs so evident," that delaying action was unnecessary. Eielsen, who was not the man to debate a matter in a meeting, arose, took his hat, and walked out This he regarded as a Christian virtue, saying it was better to leave than to quarrel; his opponents, on the other hand, said it was only another example of his incurable stubbornness.[20] No definite charges were made at this time, though even Mrs. Eielsen was cited as a witness.

[20] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *op. cit.,* 80 ff., and O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 47.

She, of course, stood faithfully by her husband, and years later at a meeting in Chicago, where Paul Anderson presided, embarrassed him by arising to ask by what authority she had been cited as a witness against Eielsen. Anderson told her to sit down, saying that as a woman she had no voice in the assembly. The charges, which were as yet very flimsy, were later given more definite form, though no reliable proof was ever offered as to Eielsen's "immoral" life. Eielsen was an easy man to slander; first, because he cared little what people might think of him; second, because he took no pains to defend himself; third, because he gloried in persecution, as he considered it, for Christ's sake. Without much ado, the meeting in 1848 declared that it "could have no confidence in Eielsen until he put these charges to rest by a Christian settlement with the proper parties." With Eielsen thus read out of the church, Paul Anderson and Ole Andrewsen sat unchallenged at the helm. Working hand in glove with them was a man who was later to come into prominence, namely, Ole J. Hatlestad. Hatlestad had come to America in the summer of 1846, consequently too late to take part in the aforementioned Jefferson Prairie meeting on April 13 and 14.[21]

With the obdurate Eielsen out of the way, the second part of their program—to join the Franckean Synod—could be carried through without difficulty. It is easy to see why Paul Anderson, the Beloit College student, desired to join the Franckeans; as for Andrewsen, he was ordained by them in 1846.[22] Through Rev. Mr. Empie of Sharon, Wisconsin, they had received a favorable impression of the Franckeans, who attempted to perpetuate on American soil the ideals of the Prussian Union, whereby Reformed and Lutherans were to ignore their differences and work together in a thoroughly unionistic fashion. The Franckean emphasis upon "Americanization," their hot opposition to slavery, and their small regard for strict confessionalism no doubt also appealed to these young men, who, as yet, were not much concerned about the vital elements of the church. That the Franckean Synod was not even regarded as Lutheran by the conservative Lutherans, they, at first, probably did not know.[23] They probably did not know, either, that the Franckeans did not accept the *Augsburg Confession,* that, on the contrary, they criticized it on several points, particularly in regard to the Lord's Supper, Baptism, and Absolution, and that they spoke slightingly about the Lutheran Ritual and substituted for it their own *Church Discipline* and *Declaration.*[24] Unfortunately for these young enthusiasts, the Franckeans were left high and dry when,

[21] O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 55. For his biography see O. M. Norlie, *Norsk Lutherske Prester i Amerika,* 100.

[22] See Norlie, *op. cit.,* 96. O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 56, however, says that Andrewsen was ordained at the first meeting of the Northern Illinois Synod, September 20, 1851.

[23] O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 46.

[24] For this *Declaration* see H. E. Jacobs, "Lutherans" in the *American Church History Series,* IV, 457.

through the powerful influence of Dr. Walther, the tide of Lutheranism suddenly shifted to a very strict confessionalism. The situation in which they found themselves can best be illustrated by the effect that their admission into the General Synod in 1864, coupled with other confessional difficulties, had on the latter body. From being by far the largest Lutheran body, comprising fully two-thirds of all Lutherans in America in 1860, the General Synod, through the defection of its members to other bodies, declined until it comprised only one-fourth the total Lutheran membership in 1868. Such was the disastrous result of their admission to the General Synod. This, then, was the body that these young men proposed to join. To that end they passed the following resolution:[25]

> In order to bring about brotherly love, and for the general promotion of religion among us, we have determined to accept the *Church Discipline* and the discipline of the Franckean Evangelical Lutheran Synod of New York and to unite with the same, yet with the reservation that our childhood faith be not taken from us; also that we do not wish to bind ourselves to any synod farther and longer than they walk according to God's Word and teach God's way correctly.

Although there is a very grave distrust apparent in the reservation that they should not go farther than God's Word, the fact remains, nevertheless, that a formal resolution was passed whereby these young churchmen joined the Franckeans. That this action raised such an outcry that the provisions of the resolution were never really carried out, makes little or no difference in regard to their treatment of Eielsen and the possible motives back of the Middle Point meeting; it was, of course, a great comfort to these men later that they had not proceeded very far with this proposed union. For the moment, however, they all three actually joined the Franckeans, for they put into operation in their congregations the Franckean *Church Discipline,* whereby they undeniably became a part of the Franckeans. That they chose this church discipline to satisfy the legal requirement that congregations must have a constitution to be incorporated,[26] only gives a legal confirmation to the fact that they were for a time Franckeans, and that their congregations were incorporated as such under the laws of Wisconsin and Illinois. To be sure, Andrewsen and Hatlestad were poor Franckeans insofar as they neglected to attend the yearly meetings (which were probably held in the East, very likely in New York state); Paul Anderson, on the other hand, actually attended a yearly meeting of the Franckeans, though his congregation was otherwise unrepresented.

As intimated, a storm of indignation burst over the heads of these

[25] O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 47. Efforts have been made in these translations to retain faithfully the style and diction of these badly written documents.

[26] O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 47. Hatlestad, Andrewsen, and Anderson take an oath on this.

young churchmen. Their summary treatment of Eielsen and their reckless action in joining another church without first making investigations certainly gave both Eielsen and others occasion for attack. They were young, zealous, and inconsiderate, and the only saving feature in the whole thing was the reservation that they should not be deprived of their childhood faith! Eielsen heaped scorn upon them for joining a synod in which they had so little confidence that they had to make a reservation of this kind before joining.[27]

In 1879, in an address delivered in June at Rushford, Minnesota, Paul Anderson, by this time an old man, was willing to admit that he had erred, saying: "And in cases where we, which now in the light of later years' experience can be seen, failed and acted less wisely than could be wished for, this happened for the simple reason that we did not understand the thing better." [28] But as a young man he had not learned this great art of retraction. In reply to attacks by Clausen and others he launched fierce counter attacks, saying that they had decided to join the Franckeans because they felt "compelled to seek protection against ministerial deception and clerical tyranny." [29] Unmindful of the impression he made, Paul Anderson wrote and said things that could not but irritate and alarm the wide-awake and watchful Lutherans of that time. In true Franckean fashion he criticized many cherished and established Lutheran customs and usages, freely designating them as papistic and formalistic:

> Many of the rites which are used in many places at Baptism are not in the least proper in the case of infant Baptism, and they have been transferred without any discrimination to infant Baptism from the Baptism of adults. Among these improper rites are the confession of faith and the renunciation of the devil. Instead of these, it would be more proper and useful to have an earnest prayer, in which the new member of the Christian Church is commended to the care and blessing of the Lord, and at the same time [there could be delivered] a touching admonitory address to the parents and others who are present. [He also said (*ibid.*)]: The Absolution is an offspring of papistic conception, and is therefore rightfully abolished by the true evangelical Lutherans. [And he further speaks of] all those who for very valid reasons for sake of conscience forever freed themselves from the Norwegian system of ceremonial slavery and from external church conditions.[30]

By denouncing the use of the *Creed* at Baptism he attacked a venerable rite which had its counterpart in the Baptism into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; without this Baptism

[27] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *op. cit.*, 82.
[28] O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.*, 44.
[29] J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.*, 52. Quoted from *Nordlyset*, April 12, 1849.
[30] Article in *Nordlyset*, No. 26. The article is dated March 26, 1849. Quoted from Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *op. cit.*, 84.

into the Trinity the Lutherans claim that there is no Baptism. When he denounced Absolution as a Catholic relic which had no place in the Lutheran Church, he touched an institution which was rated so highly by Luther that he at one time termed it a third Sacrament. As for freeing himself forever from the yoke of ceremonial bondage, that might mean anything; among the Norwegians at that time when church forms were under fire, a statement of this kind was extremely irritating. If Paul Anderson had been ignorant of the real character of the Franckean Synod at the time he entered it, he certainly now held its most advanced view on several very moot points.

But Anderson must have found this extreme position untenable for any length of time. His sanguine and youthful dreams of forcing the whole Lutheran Church into more progressive ways did not, of course, come true; on the contrary, he met very stubborn opposition from the Norwegians and—fortunately for him—some very capable help from the Swedes. Virtually ostracized and publicly warned against,[31] Anderson found a friend in the Swede, Rev. L. P. Esbjörn. This man was at this time liberal enough to sympathize with Anderson, although he was very perceptibly beginning to swerve more and more in the direction of conservatism. With Esbjörn and Anderson in the lead, a few Swedes and Norwegians (among them Andrewsen and Hatlestad) formed the Northern Illinois Synod in September, 1851, as a direct protest against the loose confessionalism of the Franckean Synod. Returning to the Scandinavian fold after the "American" adventure, Anderson and his companions learned to appreciate their Scandinavian heritage, and began to come back to relative conservatism through the arduous and circuitous way of the General Synod, with which they also parted company in 1860. Not too much can be said in this connection for Esbjörn, who soon became a theological professor. In the meantime, Anderson's venture into American Lutheran company was not so soon forgotten by his countrymen, especially those he had jilted. The persistent reminder of this Franckean experiment finally drove Anderson into a position where he could say, in 1879, that "we twenty-two years ago with clearer and firmer words than any of our accusers have accepted all the confessions of the Lutheran Church." [32]

After the meeting at Middle Point in 1848, Eielsen was again left alone without any ordained assistants, though he had many adherents among the laity. He warned his people against the doctrine of the Franckeans and at the same time kept up his tirade against the pastors of the Dietrichson party. At all times he stoutly maintained that he was the only orthodox pastor, seeing that, as he maintained, Paul Anderson and Ole Andrewsen had gone off on an anti-confes-

[31] C. L. Clausen had an article in *Nordlyset* for March 15, 1849, warning against the Franckeans, about which Anderson says it was "directly and alone applied to me." (See *Nordlyset,* April 12, 1849.)

[32] O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 48.

sional tangent in one direction, and Dietrichson, Stub, and Clausen on a Grundtvigian tangent in another direction. And there is some truth in Eielsen's assertions about the errors of the others; and yet, when he begins to put his own ideas on paper, they also become quite easily the target of assault.

In this dark hour Eielsen received a very valuable accession in Peter Andreas Rasmussen, more familiarly known as P. A. Rasmussen.[33] Having had a fair common school education in Norway, this very gifted young man of twenty-one came to America in 1850 to work, in true Haugean spirit, for the religious uplift of his emigrated countrymen. Coming to Lisbon, Illinois, in 1851, he received an appointment as a parochial school teacher, and while thus engaged he used his spare moments for translating Johan Arndt's *True Christianity*. As was customary for teachers in those days, Rasmussen conducted service by reading postils and by preaching, and this he did so well that the Lisbon people in 1853 insisted that he be ordained as their pastor. Feeling that he was not qualified for that important office by his present education, he set out for Fort Wayne, Indiana, where Dr. W. Sihler of the "Missouri" (Lutheran) Synod conducted a "practical" seminary for such as could not study the Scriptures in the original languages. Here he was ordained in 1854, and on his return from the seminary took up work in his first field, which subsequently grew to include preaching places in what is now Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. Rasmussen thus arrived on the scene in time to take part in the meeting at Koshkonong in 1850, though he was as yet so unacquainted with conditions in America and with theology in general that his share in the meeting probably amounted to little more than approving what the others did.

Nothing daunted by his bitter experiences with deliberative assemblies, in 1850 Eielsen called together some of his "friends" to a synodical meeting at Koshkonong, on October 15 and 16. At this meeting Eielsen's *Old Constitution* was put into final form, and was signed by thirty-six men, with Elling Eielsen, pastor, heading the list.[34] Among the other signers were P. A. Rasmussen, Paul H. Skavlem, Björn Hatlestad, and John Luraas. These men affirmed by their signature that,

> This constitution was first accepted at a public church meeting April 13 and 14, 1846, where a few of the widely dispersed believers were assembled at Jefferson Prairie, Rock County, Wisconsin, and at a similar church meeting (which was held at Koshkonong, October 15 and 16, 1850, when more of our widely dispersed brethren were

[33] For biographies of him see L. M. Biörn, *Pastor P. A. Rasmussen, En Livsskitse* (Minneapolis, 1905); Th. Bothne, *op. cit.*, 842; J. C. Jensson, *American Lutheran Biographies*, 602, etc.

[34] The Norwegian Synod leaders referred to these as the "thirty-seven faithfuls," indicating that they thought that the signers of the *Old Constitution* were thirty-seven instead of thirty-six.

assembled) was again accepted, and in affirmation of this it is subscribed to by the following, who personally were present at this meeting, that is, at Koshkonong.

It is agreed on all sides, however, that the *Old Constitution* underwent revisions in the years between 1846 and 1850. This constitution contains a paragraph (six) against Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, a paragraph (ten) against Rev. H. A. Stub, a paragraph (twenty) against Paul Anderson and his like, and on the whole it is a document which, judged by its references to contemporary events, must date more from 1850 than 1846. Insofar as Eielsen remembered certain portions of the constitution of 1846, the latter possibly became, as Brohaugh and Eisteinsen say,[35] the foundation upon which the so-called *Old Constitution* of 1850 was built.

Dating the *Old Constitution* at 1850 instead of 1846 does not necessarily have the effect of throwing the date of the founding of Eielsen's church forward to 1850, though the Norwegian Synod for very similar reasons dated its foundation not from 1851, but from 1853. Eielsen neither had the first constitution of 1846 properly preserved either through publication or otherwise, nor did he hesitate to rewrite it in a most unwarranted manner in 1850. Since absolutely no effort was made to indicate what belonged to the original text and what later entered into it in the form of additions, amendments, and expurgations, and since the constitution of 1846 had certain qualities sadly lacking in the constitution of 1850, we cannot but conclude that the two are so different that they can hardly be regarded as the same document.

Most likely Eielsen, who never mastered the fundamental rules of parliamentary proceedings, did not fully realize what the action of 1848 at Middle Point meant. In a way he had severed his connection with his church, insofar as he had bolted the convention; in another way the others had done so, insofar as they had accepted the Franckean *Church Discipline.* Without bothering himself much about the delicate questions that were involved, he simply met with his friends at Koshkonong on October 15 and 16, 1850, and drew up his famous *Old Constitution,* which, admittedly, is a confession of what a church ought to be, but not a working basis upon which a church can operate. This so-called *Old Constitution* was very likely Eielsen's sermon adapted to the circumstances, being much more a homily on eternal and present issues than a constitution by which coming generations could guide their religious and practical affairs. Because practically every part of the *Old Constitution* has been subject to attack, I shall translate it and give it as it is found in Chapter IV of Rev. J. A. Bergh's *Den nosk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika.*[36] At the great risk of doing violence to the English language—the original does

[35] *Op. cit.,* 75.

[36] 49. Parts of it are also quoted in O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 38 ff.

violence to the Norwegian—I shall try to retain its quaint and faulty diction. It reads:

THE "OLD CONSTITUTION." CHURCH-CONSTITUTION FOR THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AT JEFFERSON PRAIRIE, ETC., IN NORTH AMERICA.

1. Whereas we, the united ones, have by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ united and joined ourselves together into an official church body in the Lutheran Church, be it hereby firmly resolved and decided, that this our church body shall forever continue to be, just as it now is, in conformity to the genuine Lutheran faith and doctrine, and built on God's Word in the Holy Scriptures in conjunction with the *Apostolic* and *Augsburg Articles of Faith,* which together with the Word are the rule for our church order, and for our faith and confession, as living members under our Savior Jesus Christ, who is the Head of our Church.

2. In accordance with the order and method which the Holy Scriptures teach and convince, that nothing common or unclean can enter the New Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 27, etc.), no one ought to be accepted as a member of our body, except he has passed through a genuine conversion or is on the way to conversion, so he has a noticeable sorrow for his sins, and hunger and thirst after righteousness, from which must follow an improvement in his conduct as a testimony of the living faith's activity in soul and heart, about which the Scriptures witness so expressly that they are the inescapable necessity for every true member of the true church body.

3. Every member in the church must consequently strive, in virtue of the power of faith, to walk piously and blamelessly, and have constantly a wakeful eye upon himself, because he in love must remind others, who walk faultily (Gal. vi. 1). Not to pass harsh and merciless judgments on his failing brother, as one who sees the mote in his brother's eye but is unaware of the beam in his own; but as a Christian, to whom it is becoming to seek the pure truth; and then one cannot possibly say good about the evil.

4. One should according to Jesus's Word in Matt. xviii. 15-17, remind and punish the failing between himself and him alone, and not trumpet forth his hidden faults to his harm and to the offense of others; if he hear you, you have won your brother. But if he does not hear, then take one or two others with you, that the whole matter may be established at the mouth of two or three witnesses. But if he does not hear them, then tell it to the congregation; but if he does not hear the congregation, then he shall be for you as a heathen.

5. He who, with the prodigal son, repents of his trespass before God and man, he should be taken in again in the church body, and the church must not refuse that also that one is given absolution, that is, assurance of God's grace in Christ.

6. With popish authority and also the common ministerial garb we henceforth have absolutely nothing to do, since there is no proof in the New Testament that Jesus or his disciples have used or enjoined it. On the contrary, we can read in Matt. xxiii. 5, Mark

xii. 38, and Luke xx. 46 that Jesus chastised those who went about in long clothes and performed [acts of] piety to be well thought of by men. Experience also teaches, that both minister and hearer [worshiper] often place a blind confidence in the dead church ceremonies and clerical garb, and through this do away with God's command because of their custom (Matt. xv. 6).

7. We believe that there is only one Master, who has left us an example to follow in doctrine, life and relations, namely, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, who entered into the Holy [Place], and found an eternal propitiation.

8. We also believe that the teaching estate is a holy estate, and instituted by God; as Paul says: "We are ambassadors in Christ's stead, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. v. 20). But this estate is abused by many as a deadly poison, so that they cheat both themselves and also others of the hope of salvation, until they awake in hell (Is. iii. 12; Matt. vii. 15).

9. Teachers or preachers ought to be elected by the congregation in such a way that they at least are taken on trial one year before they are permanently and rightly elected. Those who are talented with aptitude for teaching must procure the necessary knowledge, as far as the circumstances permit; but this, as everything else, must be subject to the Lord in faith and obedience, that not ours but His will is done. Paul says: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today yea and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8). He himself chose lay and unlearned men to proclaim his Gospel, which also was done with such power and wisdom, that the worldly wise in surprise had to ask: Are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we, every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? (Acts ii. 7-11, iv. 13). Jesus likewise says, that He not only will be with His apostles to the end of the world, but also with all those who, on account of their words, believe on Him; and that He will give all those the Holy Ghost who humbly ask Him for it.

10. The young should be instructed in God's Word from their early youth. The A B C Book,[37] Luther's *Small Catechism* of the older unadulterated editions, and E. Pontoppidan's *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed*[38] should be learnt and be explained for the young, so they can be enlightened concerning all of God's plan of salvation. Each master and mistress should diligently instruct their children and members of their household, and by prayer and the meditation on God's Word help along as much as they by God's grace are able, that they, as living branches, can grow into the true vine, into which they are grafted; and likewise become accustomed to prayer and to call upon the Lord, since the children especially are more easily induced to pray than grown-ups. The grown-ups should pray with a reverent mien; because also this will have influence on the hearts of the young and attune their minds to more sobriety; especially ought to be held forth the sweet love of Jesus toward those who call on him.

11. We should make it a point to further schools and instruction, and, as Christ's true followers, let God's Word dwell richly among

[37] A beginner's book in Norwegian. [38] *Truth unto Godliness.*

ourselves, and, besides, do good to all, but most to those of the household of faith, who are united to help the needy as well in their physical as their spiritual need.

12. It shall also be the minister's duty, with the help of the congregation, to procure the necessary books, the wealthy paying the bill, since the needy must have them free of charge, who have not the means to pay.

13. The children must be educated in both languages, but in the mother tongue first, though in such a way that the district school is not neglected.

14. We united ones repudiate altogether the fearful sin of giving our consent to the slave traffic; but rather use all possible diligence in bringing about, and supporting, opposition to it, to the freeing of the negroes, since Jesus has said, "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them; for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. vii. 12). They are also redeemed with the same blood and intended to inherit the same bliss, as other races. We advise that each one give this matter closer consideration.

15. Likewise each one is reminded, who brings on dissension in the congregation and seeks to organize his own party, that those who are confirmed in the Lord and are what the Scriptures call "elders," ought then convene together, and use all possible diligence in bringing about unity in faith, doctrine, and relations. If this bears no fruit on the contentious, then do as Paul says: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is perverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself" (Titus iii. 10, 11). About such it is that John says: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest how that they were not all of us" (I John ii. 19).

16. Each congregation shall elect "elders," who shall supervise all things in the church, such as the members' daily relations and circumstances, whether the school is rightly conducted, and, besides, see to it that those who speak for edification do not go their own ways, and that they hold fast to the wholesome teaching and such other things as necessity requires; and, finally, that they are subject one to another in godliness.

17. Likewise ought the congregation to combine to support by freewill gifts those persons who are elected by the congregation to travel about and proclaim God's Word.

18. The congregation ought to use all diligence in getting "awakened" and Christian-minded school teachers, who stand with the believers in the unity of faith, to the end that the young might be taught and rightly catechized and be given a true enlightenment in their Christianity, so that they can comprehend and understand it rightly to the renewal of their baptismal covenant, and thereby be renewed and grow in faith and in love to God and their neighbor.

19. A pastor should, according to Paul's admonition in I Tim. iii. 2, be blameless. If he, accordingly, after his election fall into perverse doctrine or anything worthy of censure, then the same means be used here, as are described in paragraph four above. If

the milder ones do not bear fruit, so that one must perforce use the stricter, namely, expulsion from the congregation, then his errors should be publicly proclaimed in accordance with I Tim. v. 20; II Tim. iii. 7-9, etc., and thus in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the unity of faith, and with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ surrender such an one to Satan, for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit might be saved on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (I Cor. v. 45). In this, as in all things else, the Holy Scriptures are the only source from which the wholesome teaching flows out, especially when the Holy Spirit can get room to work in the hearts both of the teacher and the hearer, so they become subject to God and each other in the fear of God, and disposed to love each other mutually of a pure heart.

20. The Sacraments of Baptism and the Altar are administered according to the Ritual and Altar Book of the Church of Norway, which we in all parts follow as far as the blessed doctrine is concerned. Nevertheless, the laying on of hands at Absolution is not used, since it cannot be seen from Holy Scriptures that Jesus and his apostles have used this at the Lord's Supper; but as Paul reminds each to try himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. But when the pastor in his preparatory address has made plain the way of life and the way of death, as a true shepherd of souls, he concludes his preparatory address in this wise: "Accordingly, then, from God's Word is declared to all penitent, repentant, and believing souls the forgiveness of sins in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

God give us all His grace to unite in Jesus's name and in Jesus's mind, that the power of his suffering and death might show itself in all our ways. Amen.

Then follow thirty-six signatures of those present at the meeting. Among these signers are Eielsen and P. A. Rasmussen.

This *Constitution* had its very great faults. It did not provide a name for the congregation or synod—it was to be a combination congregational and synodical constitution; nor did it mention anything about officers, their duties, the government of the church, its yearly meetings, rules for conducting business, and other elements that have a place in a constitution. It did have an ample and detailed confession of faith, but here too much was said. In paragraph one they wished to emphasize that they were Lutherans, but in so doing occasioned the charge that they exceeded even the Grundtvigians and placed the Confessions of the Church on a par with the Word of God. Paragraph two, it was likewise charged, is Donatistic, inasmuch as it stipulates that only the converted or nearly converted were eligible to membership in this church. The *Augsburg Confession* rejects this view. Paragraph six speaks about ceremonies and the wearing of the gown in such a way that it came into direct conflict with Article VII of the *Augsburg Confession.* Paragraph ten is against Rev. H. A. Stub, who was suspected of *Wexelsism,* i.e. of sympathy with Wexels, who tried to introduce a revised *Explanation* to the Catechism to supplant Dr. E. Pontop-

pidan's *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed.* Paragraph fifteen condemns schismatics and might well be construed as a parting shot at Paul Anderson. Paragraph twenty reasserts adherence to the Norwegian Church Ritual, which Paul Anderson had attacked; it also presents a view of Absolution which is contrary to Articles XI and XII of the *Augsburg Confession.* All told, it was an unfortunate document which was to cause a great deal of trouble, especially within Eielsen's own ranks. By these acts of 1850 a church body was organized which henceforth was known as *The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Eielsen's Synod,* or simply the *Ellingians.*

CHAPTER VI

THE PREUSES—THE KOSHKONONG GROUP ORGANIZES

J. W. C. DIETRICHSON and his party, in the meantime, had not been inactive. They not only carried on a far-reaching missionary and organizing activity, but also took up for serious consideration the founding of a synod.

Dietrichson saw from the very first the necessity of some sort of synodical organization. In his *Reise,* printed in 1846, he says:

> Very likely it has not escaped the attentive reader, that the congregations organized in the various settlements as yet stand isolated from each other, without any organic union of the congregations being brought about; that this, as the only condition for inner and outer strength in the congregations, is absolutely necessary, if the established church order shall become firm, can easily be seen. This need can only be met, when, after the arrival of several clergymen, they, together with the representatives from the congregations, form a synodical union with synodical meetings.[1]

When Stub came to America, Dietrichson again brought the matter to the fore. In this Stub and Clausen seconded him. In April, 1849, these three pastors joined in issuing a call for a meeting to be held at Koshkonong on the 15th of July of that year. After outlining in genuine Grundtvigian fashion how necessary it was for the individual congregation to belong to a church body in order to promote its salvation, they—or really Dietrichson, who seems to be the author—state the purposes of the meeting:

> 1. To decide whether a synod or convention shall be organized to bind together the congregations, ministers as well as lay people.
> 2. Write a constitution for the synod or convention, and also to elect a president and other officials, whose duties shall be more definitely determined.
> 3. Consider what changes must be made in the Ritual of the Church of Norway to meet the American requirements, without, of course, changing its doctrine.
>
> Other things also will naturally be taken up at this meeting.[2]

They thereupon discuss in an impolitic fashion the delicate question of the apportionment of delegates, proposing that the main con-

[1] *Reise,* 118, n.

[2] The text of this call is found in Bergh, *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika,* 63.

gregations have three delegates, the tributary congregations one each, and the Jefferson Prairie congregation, though a tributary congregation, yet very large, two delegates. These delegates must be Christian-minded men, who have a sense of churchliness, and must be otherwise capable and upright men. The committee issuing the call shall, of course, pass on the credentials of each one, and if they find that ungodly or unchurchly people are sent, they shall refuse to seat them in the convention. Detailed instruction was also given as to when and how the congregations should elect their delegates. This was then signed by the three pastors.

Throughout, the document breathes Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson's irritating and dictatorial spirit. It was thoroughly Grundtvigian both in its "churchly view" and in its exaltation of Baptism. Little wonder, then, that Reymert, particularly, and Even Heg, both of whom thoroughly resented Dietrichson's overbearing attitude,[3] regarded this invitation with suspicion and, in the case of Reymert, with open hostility. To Reymert this was only a veiled attempt to introduce episcopacy in America, with Dietrichson as the probable bishop. This prospect was so uninviting that he and others could not remain silent. When the matter came up for discussion in the Muskego congregation, Rev. H. A. Stub, the pastor, was sick, and hence the opposition had free hands to lay the matter on the table. This they did by passing the following resolution on May 29, 1849:

> After diligently inquiring into what the desire and wish of the people are in regard to the invitation issued by the evangelical Lutheran pastors to elect representatives to a convention to be held at Koshkonong this summer, we are of the opinion that all further steps in this matter ought to be deferred until our own domestic affairs are more completely ordered, also until the congregation, after a riper consideration of the proposed union with the other pastors and evangelical Lutheran congregations in Wisconsin, has come to the conclusion that this same can with comparative ease be brought about.
>
> Very respectfully,
> *Jörgen Larson,* Secretary,
> *J. D. Reymert,* President.[4]

With a great deal of truth it might be said that Dietrichson's personality so completely obscured this very worthy plan that the meeting which the pastors called in 1849 never took place. When the time came for the meeting, both Clausen and Stub were prevented from being present,[5] and all that Dietrichson could do was to read his sketch of a constitution to the few scattered delegates who had met.

[3] We have above noted that Even Heg gave Stub a cold reception when he came to America because Heg and Reymert had been mortally offended at Dietrichson. See above, 93.

[4] The text is found in J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.,* 66.

[5] H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift,* 42.

But matters took a rather favorable turn the next year. Dietrichson returned to Norway in 1850, never to set his foot on American soil again. Heroic as he had been, well-meaning as he undoubtedly was, possessed of some talent for organization as he assuredly was, nevertheless he had an arrogant and irritating manner which gave offense and aroused opposition. In Norway, Dietrichson remained a pastor until, after a checkered career, he was dismissed in 1876, and made postmaster at Porsgrund. He died in 1883.

Before his departure, Dietrichson had arranged to have his congregations at Koshkonong served by his brother-in-law, Rev. Adolph Carl Preus, who came to America for that purpose in 1850. Rev. A. C. Preus was born in Trondhjem, Norway, June 29, 1814. After private instruction (1828-34) he was sent to the University of Christiania (1834-41), where he received his A.B., A.M., and candidate of theology degrees. For three years he was teacher at Kopervik, and in the years 1842-50 he was *personel kapellan* at Gjerpen, Skien. In America he organized twenty congregations and served as president of the Norwegian Synod. In 1862 he returned to Norway, where he served as pastor until his death on June 8, 1878.[6]

Rev. A. C. Preus at once took up the work of organizing a synod. Before the end of 1850 he invited the pastors and congregations to a meeting to be held on January 4 and following days, 1851, in Rev. C. L. Clausen's charge at Luther Valley, Rock Prairie, Wisconsin. Not only did this meeting take place but it was well reported by Preus in the first issue of *Maanedstidende,* March, 1851.[7]

Not much was accomplished on January 4. The 5th, which was a Sunday, was naturally set aside for divine services, Preus preaching a sermon on Eph. iv. 15, 16. On Monday, January 6, there were present, besides the three pastors, Stub, Clausen, and Preus, thirty delegates from eighteen congregations. In spite of efforts to "kill" this convention also, only four congregations neglected to send representatives.[8] After credentials had been examined and the time of sessions and rules for conducting business had been agreed upon, the convention proceeded to the election of a temporary chairman and two temporary secretaries. Rev. A. C. Preus was elected chairman and Erik Ellefson and Hans Henriksen were elected secretaries. Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson's draft of the synodical constitution, which was read in 1849, was now submitted by Preus, who seemed to have been altogether unaware of the Grundtvigian implication in the words *in our baptismal covenant and* in its first paragraph. To the two other pastors, if they were at all aware of its implications, this offered no difficulty, hence the work of the convention progressed quite rapidly and harmoniously, until the ques-

[6] O. M. Norlie, *Norsk Lutherske Prester i Amerika,* 97.
[7] For this paper see below, 139.
[8] A. C. Preus in *Maanedstidende,* March, 1851, 5.

tion of a name for the synod was raised. Since this was not provided for in the draft, some thought the name might be inserted as a heading. Finally, Preus and a majority with him put through a motion that it should be given a separate paragraph, and that this paragraph should be numbered *one*. The question of a name also evoked discussion. Dietrichson had proposed, *The Norwegian Church in America;* Clausen proposed, *The Norwegian Lutheran Church in America;* Jacobsen of Muskego, *The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;* Ole Nielsen from Heart Prairie, *The Church of the True Religion;* and A. C. Preus, the *Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.* As was their custom in case of differences of opinion, they "slept on it," and voted the next day. When the question came up again, Preus's proposal that the synod be called *The Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* was accepted.[9]

Questions were asked concerning the meaning of *synodical-presbyterial* form of church government, but these were satisfactorily answered, as all felt that there had to be some, though not too much, church government.[10] The Muskego delegation, which apparently had no thought of joining the church body, made a fight to have outsiders granted the privilege of speaking and making motions even if they could not vote in the yearly meetings. This met with heated opposition, and finally ended in a compromise, proposed by Rev. C. L. Clausen, to add a footnote to the paragraph (seven) in question. The question of the balance of power between the lay and clerical members in the church council brought out some discussion, the original motion, stipulating four laymen to two pastors, being upheld against Clausen and Preus, who wanted three laymen to two pastors. The laymen objected to the use of the word *ban* in connection with the exclusion of members and succeeded in having the Ritual changed so as to obviate the use of this objectionable word. With other major and minor discussions coming to a satisfactory close, the meeting accepted a constitution of twelve paragraphs and seventeen by-laws.

In the *Special Synodical Decisions* is stipulated what was to be done about applicants for membership whose Baptism (paragraph one) and confirmation (paragraph two) had been received at the hands of persons whose ordinations were not acknowledged by this body. The point was that Dietrichson and Clausen had not acknowledged Eielsen's ordination, and Dietrichson, at any rate, performed these acts again before he admitted anyone baptized or confirmed by Eielsen into membership in his church. Eielsen, for his part, made no effort to prove that he was ordained, regarding

[9] This body was later known as *The Norwegian Synod,* or simply *The Synod.*

[10] There should be a *synod* to which delegates were sent. This central body should have advisory power, as the primary and highest unit of power was the congregation.

Clausen's and Dietrichson's queries as insults, saying they wanted to "confirm" his ordination.[11]

Clausen provoked quite a discussion by introducing a motion condemning the doctrine that there is a conversion after death. Stub strenuously objected to this, though he was careful to say that he thought that only the heathen could be thus converted. The purpose of this motion was to put the synod on record as being against Wexels' new doctrine, which appeared in his *Explanation* of the *Catechism.* This *Explanation* was stigmatized by the Haugeans as *Wexelsboka* (i.e. Wexels' Book). Its chief faults were that it did not, like Pontoppidan and the Haugeans, condemn dancing, theater-going, and similar things. It also taught the possibility of conversion after death for the heathen. In view of the bitter fight in Norway over these things from 1843 and on, and in view of the disturbances this fight also caused in the popular mind in America, Stub's position had become a distinct liability to the Koshkonong-Muskego group.[12] Clausen's motion was adopted and thus eventually put to rest the accusation of Wexelsism leveled against the Norwegian Synod.

Rules for examining parochial school teachers were laid down. It was also agreed that repentant sinners should be reinstated. It was decided that a meeting of the congregations be held in February, 1852, in the Muskego church. At the election of officers, Rev. A. C. Preus refused to serve; hence Rev. C. L. Clausen was elected *superintendent,* with Preus the second officer. In this election the (three) Muskego delegates, the (one) Skoponong, and the (one) Heart Prairie delegate refused to vote, in protest against having an election at this meeting.

In an article which appeared April 1, 1851, in *Maanedstidende,* Clausen most heartily commended the constitution to the congregations, saying that the rights of the congregations were most definitely guaranteed by this document, which guards against all arbitrariness on the part of the pastors. This was to disarm the Ellingians, who were wont to compare the lordliness of the pastors with their own "free" system. It was also to reassure those who honestly questioned the wisdom of entrusting too much power to such pastors as Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson.

In 1851 the Koshkonong group received some very substantial reinforcements. Rev. A. C. Preus in *Maanedstidende* for April, 1851, reported that he had just heard from Dietrichson in Norway that the candidate in theology, Herman Amberg Preus, had accepted a call to Spring Prairie, Bonnet Prairie, and Norway Grove. Few at the time realized the importance of this man's coming. In him the Norwegian Evangelical Church of America, later known as the Norwegian Synod, was to have its chief and leader for a whole

[11] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed,* 65.

[12] For the Haugean fight on *Wexelsism* or *Wexels lären* see Halvdan Koht, "Fra en norsk kirkestrid," in *Symra,* 1907, 59-70.

generation. In 1862 he was elected the president of the body, a position he held until his death in 1894.

Rev. J. A. Bergh gives a noteworthy characterization of this man, which is well worthy of a place here:

> Rev. H. A. Preus possibly does not possess the dialectic ability of his great co-laborer, Jacob Aall Ottesen, is not a diplomat like Rev. V. Koren, or an eloquent preacher like P. A. Rasmussen, or a persistent worker like Prof. Laur. Larsen, or a quick thinker like B. J. Muus, or as learned as Prof. F. A. Schmidt; but H. A. Preus is a well-balanced pilot, who, with a powerful hand and a clear eye, guides the ship of the church toward the desired goal. He is logical in his thought, orderly in his speech, friendly but decisive in his deportment, and is orthodox to the very tips of his fingers. He belongs to that class of Norwegian theologians who have completely broken with the old rationalism without at the same time being touched by the Johnsonian awakening, hence does not value highly the Haugean movement. Haugeans did not always come up to his standard of orthodoxy, and for Preus it was pure doctrine that is of greatest importance. Accordingly, he has a sharp eye for every error, actual or imagined. For him it becomes the great object of the Norwegian Synod to gather the Lutheran Christians about the revealed truth and defend it against every error. No deviation can be tolerated. In this his co-laborers faithfully helped him. Koren, Larsen, Ottesen belong to the same theological school and they aid each other faithfully in the fight. Muus comes from more pietistic circles, but he soon falls in line with the others. With these men at the helm, the course of the Norwegian Synod is determined for years to come.[13]

Another pastor, Rev. Nils Brandt, came to America in the same year on a call from the Pine Lake congregations, though he was soon to be sent to Iowa on a missionary journey. He later became a professor at Luther College.[14]

Another accession this year was Rev. G. F. Dietrichson, who is not to be confused with Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, who left America for good in 1850. Rev. G. F. Dietrichson took Rev. C. L. Clausen's place at Luther Valley, the latter retiring from the active ministry for the ten years 1851-1861 on account of bad health. Clausen,

[13] J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.*, 80. For biography see *Livsbilleder fra den lutherske kirke i Amerika* (Decorah, Iowa), 57.

[14] The following information is found in *Prestekalenderen*, 98; Brandt, Nils Olsen, ord. 1851; outside 1851-52, Nor. Synod, 1853-82. B. in W. Slidre, Valdres, Hamar, January 29, 1824; received private instruction, to U. of Christiania 1844-49 (A.B., A.M., C.T.), emigrated 1851, clergyman near Watertown (Rock River), Wis., 1851-65, missionary in N. E. Iowa and Minnesota 1851-53 (first pastor from Norway west of Mississippi), pastor, Decorah, Iowa, 1865-82, prof. of languages and religion, Luther College, 1865-82, one of six (seven) pastors who organized the Norwegian Synod, 1853, v.p. same, 1857-71, member of church council, 1857-84, since 1885 he has lived with his son, Rev. R. O. Brandt, co-editor of *Kirketidende*, 1869-77. M. to Diderikke Ottesen, 1856 (d. 85). Brandt died August 13, 1921.

however, continued to take a very lively interest in the church body that was being formed, though his removal to St. Ansgar, Iowa, in 1853 prevented him from taking part in its convention from that time until 1861. The year thus marked three accessions and one retirement, making the list of pastors six besides Clausen.[15]

In accordance with the motion passed at the convention of 1851, the congregations met for renewed consultations at Muskego, February 1, 1852. As it was Sunday, divine service was held, at which Rev. H. A. Stub preached and Rev. C. L. Clausen offered prayer. On Monday, February 2, when the meeting was called to order, it was found that there were, besides the three pastors, Stub, Clausen and A. C. Preus, ten representatives from six congregations who could claim a seat in the convention.[16]

Although the delegates at the Luther Valley meeting in 1851 undoubtedly had dispersed with the feeling that they had taken definite and binding action, yet Rev. A. C. Preus arose as soon as the Muskego meeting of 1852 was organized and introduced this striking motion:

> Moved that the decisions of the church convention held in Luther Valley church, accepted by the present synod as its church organization, be regarded as mere preliminary motions; and that the members of the present synod join with the pastors and delegates from the congregations that have not yet joined the synod, in order to review and test the synodical constitution.[17]

In support of his motion, he called attention to the fact that the three pastors who had arrived from Norway in the course of the last year had had no share in the formation of the proposed body, and that there were many representatives from congregations outside the present body who should have a part in laying the foundation of the synod. The motion carried unanimously.

This startling motion actually dissolved the church that was established in 1851 and, with one stroke, made the work of Clausen, Stub, and A. C. Preus crumble. Only the direst need would warrant such drastic action, and that need arose as a result of adopting Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson's Grundtvigian constitution. This had

[15] The *Prestekalenderen* has the following: Dietrichson, Gustav Fredrik, ord. 1851, outside 1851-52, Nor. Synod 1853-59, b. in Christianssand, Norway, October 8, 1813, of Lieut. Col. Erasmus D. and Marie, to U. of Christiania 1833-42 (A.M., C.T.), teacher at Stavanger 1842-51, emigrated 1851: clergyman, Luther Valley, Wis., 1851-59, one of six (seven) pastors to found the Nor. Synod, 1853. Returned to Norway, 1859, member of church council 1853-59, d. 1886.

[16] The minutes of this meeting were printed in *Maanedstidende*, April, 1852, 5. They are more conveniently found in H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift*, 50.

[17] Text in *Maanedstidende*, April, 1852, 5.

the words *in our baptismal covenant and,*[18] and since Dietrichson had taken care to have paragraph two, in which they occurred, made unamendable, the members of the convention of 1851 had permanently committed themselves to Grundtvigianism. Rev. H. A. Preus, Rev. N. O. Brandt, and Rev. G. F. Dietrichson would therefore have nothing to do with the proposed organization; neither would a large number of congregations. H. A. Preus and J. W. C. Dietrichson, for instance, at their very first encounter in Christiania, Norway, in 1850, had a very heated argument concerning this Grundtvigian clause which Dietrichson had inserted into the constitution he had written for the congregations which he established. Preus vowed that he would have this clause removed as the congregations—as Dietrichson also admitted—did not know its implications.[19] H. A. Preus, Brandt, and G. F. Dietrichson represented the ascendant tide of anti-Grundtvigianism under the leadership of Prof. Gisle Johnson at Christiania. Since these men and a number of congregations would not accept the Grundtvigian clause in the constitution of 1851, the only alternative was for those who had formulated this constitution to declare it null and void and start over again. This they unanimously decided to do.

The three pastors and ten delegates who opened the session were now joined by Rev. G. F. Dietrichson, Luther Valley; Rev. H. A. Preus, Spring Prairie; Rev. N. Brandt, Rock River and Pine Lake; and twenty-six delegates, so that, when the meeting convened again after its short dissolution, it consisted of six pastors and thirty-six delegates from twenty-one congregations. This body immediately fell into a temporary deadlock on the election of a chairman, Rev. C. L. Clausen and Rev. G. F. Dietrichson receiving the same number of votes. After some sort of misunderstanding had been cleared away, a new ballot was cast, and this time A. C. Preus received twenty-five votes for chairman and Dietrichson fourteen votes for vice-chairman. Rules of order were next adopted, and a nomination committee of ten was elected. Dietrichson moved that the deliberations of this convention should be considered preliminary also. When it was objected that this would entail waste of time, he replied that it was better to take time for deliberation rather than make mistakes by precipitous action. The convention voted to "sleep on it" and adjourned.

After a very short sleep indeed, the convention began its ses-

[18] The objection to this phrase was that it placed the baptismal covenant on a par with Scripture. The Grundtvigians held that the *Apostolic Creed,* used in the baptismal covenant, was divinely inspired, hence the key to the interpretation of the Bible.

[19] H. A. Preus, *Professorerne Oefstedals og Weenaas's "Wisconsinisme" betragtet i Sandhedens Lys. Et. Gjensvar til Professor Weenaas* (Decorah, Iowa, 1875), 6, note. When A. C. Preus's attention was called to this Grundtvigian clause, he not only heartily repudiated it, but also wrote two articles in *Stavanger Amstidende* against it. His excuse was that he had too readily adopted Dietrichson's draft of 1849.

sion by prayer, song, and Scripture reading on Tuesday, February 3, at six in the morning. Dietrichson's motion was discussed and passed with one dissenting vote (Ole Vraastad's).

A number of motions calling for the appointment of a series of committees were then passed.[20] As these illustrate the problems confronting this young church, they are worthy of our attention.

Rev. A. C. Preus led off with four motions calling for the establishment of certain committees. His first motion was to have a committee consider and report upon the matter of a closer affiliation with the Joint Ohio (Lutheran) Synod. In this connection, arrangements might be made to use this synod's university at Columbus, Ohio. His next motion called for special investigation as to whether something might not be done for the awakening of more spiritual life in the congregations. A third motion called for a memorial to the Wisconsin legislature regarding the use of the oath in the formula of marriage. His fourth motion looked to the amendment of the *Ritual of the Church of Denmark and Norway* to meet the exigencies imposed by American conditions, especially in connection with the solemnization of marriage.

Rev. G. F. Dietrichson moved that a pastoral committee be elected whose duty it should be to procure ordained ministers from Norway to take up work among their countrymen in America, and to place these ministers at the most strategic points.

Rev. C. L. Clausen moved that something be done to bring about a union of the Lutheran forces among the Norwegians. In answer to discouraging, but very self-evident, assertions that in case the others had desired union they would now have attended and assisted in the work of organizing this synod, Clausen replied that everything possible nevertheless should be done. The others concurred, Dietrichson making a warm plea for a united Norwegian Lutheranism.

On motion by Rev. H. A. Preus, it was decided to elect a committee whose duty it should be to take care of the affairs of the Synod between this and the next meetings. After the committee on nominations had proposed an acceptable list of candidates for each position on all of these committees, the convention proceeded to its chief business, the review of the constitution.[21]

Paragraph one, containing the name, was retained unchanged.

Not so with paragraph two. In this occurred the words, *in our baptismal covenant and,* to which H. A. Preus strenuously objected on the grounds that they were Grundtvigian, and further, that no support whatsoever could be found for this doctrine either in the Bible or in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. Far be it from this small organization to presume to add to or detract from the Confessions of the Church, especially since such action would only engender strife and contention. H. A. Preus observed that, although he

[20] These motions are found in *Maanedstidende,* April, 1852, 7, 8.
[21] These proceedings are recorded in *Maanedstidende,* April, 1852, 9-16.

not only had voted for the constitution of 1851, but also had these very words in his congregational constitution at Koshkonong, yet he would willingly make this change. Rev. N. Brandt would vote with Rev. H. A. Preus, as his views were not expressed in the paragraph as it was formulated in 1851. They decided to defer action till the morrow.

In regard to paragraph three, Stub wanted to put, in the place of "churchly ordination to the clerical office," the words, "Ordained in the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church." Gulbrand Myhre thought that the sense of the substitute was contained in the first draft. H. A. Preus moved that these words be added to the paragraph: "In case a pastor from another synod, who is properly examined, rightly called, and given churchly ordination to the clerical office, wishes to enter our church, he shall take the Norwegian pastoral oath, so amended as the chief authorities of our church may deem necessary." Stub stood by his motion, saying that it was of great importance that all the pastors in the same church had the same education and development, as a uniformity of work would thereby be enhanced. It was decided to postpone action till the next day.

No debates of any importance took place regarding paragraphs four, five, six, seven, and eight. Since we expect to give these in their final form later, we shall not stop to consider them here. The meeting on Tuesday adjourned with hymn singing and prayer.

On Wednesday, February 4, H. A. Preus repeated his motion that *in our baptismal covenant and* be struck out of paragraph two. All voted for this except Clausen, who declared that the paragraph as originally formulated expressed his convictions on this point.[22]

Stub brought forth anew his motion requiring of prospective pastors that they be ordained in the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church. A. C. Preus opposed this, saying that it gave rise to doubt as to Clausen's right to be a pastor in the church, seeing he had not had the ordination prescribed by this motion. On the whole, it seemed to conflict with the churchly conception of ordination.[23] Stub maintained that he did not have Clausen in mind as Clausen's ordination had been expressly declared valid. Further, this motion was not to have a retroactive force, but was to serve as a precaution against the admission of poorly qualified sectarian ministers, who might, in the future, desire to enter the church. Stub's motion was rejected with only one vote for it (presumably Stub's own vote). Stub then tried to make an addition to H. A. Preus's motion, but this also was rejected with only one vote for it.

Out of the contests on this fateful Wednesday there emerged

[22] Prudence, and possibly the desire on all sides to maintain peace, might have prevented an open rupture on this point at this time. Clausen's retirement from the ministry might also have done something to stave off the evil day. At any rate, it was fortunate that a controversy was not precipitated at this time, as the young body was unable to stand the strain.

[23] Possibly this was a keen-edged thrust at Stub's supposedly Grandtvigian "churchly conception."

clearly and distinctly the potent influence of Rev. H. A. Preus, which was already making itself felt. He had forced the annulment of the constitution of 1851 and had, despite Clausen's protests, inserted anti-Grundtvigian clauses into the new draft. Stub's supposed Grundtvigian "churchly conception" had been rejected, and Stub himself had been humiliated. To forestall any combined counter action by Stub and Clausen, the Preuses, as we shall presently see, managed to drive a wedge between them by supporting Clausen's motion regarding conversion after death. Stub took his rebuffs with good grace, permitting the convention to go on undisturbed with its work. Paragraphs nine, ten, eleven, and twelve were discussed and, after a few minor changes had been made, were accepted substantially in their original form.

In the consideration of the seventeen by-laws, a very interesting question arose in connection with No. 5, which deals with the language question and Christian education. The Synod went on record as being opposed to a hasty and precipitate transition from Norwegian to English, it being thought that the transition could be made much more safely by a gradual and natural process.[24] A child should learn Norwegian first, and then, at about the age of thirteen, begin the study of English. In their opinion, both the discipline and the spirit of the "common school" were disturbing factors in the proper Christian nurture of the child.[25] Thus we see that both the language question and the question of elementary Christian education is as old as the Norwegian American Lutheran Church, yes, older.

In connection with the other by-laws many interesting points were made, but the by-laws in most instances remained essentially unchanged.

Of the *Special Synodical Decisions,*[26] one is especially noteworthy. Rev. C. L. Clausen repeated his motion of the former year against conversion after death, adding the clause that the persons who held these views should be excluded from the church and that the books containing this doctrine should be condemned. He further proposed that this article be made irrevocable. Although this motion was regarded by some as superfluous, because the acceptance of the Confessions of the Lutheran Church in itself constituted a condemnation of this doctrine, it was passed as a reassurance that the

[24] This undoubtedly was a conscious or unconscious rap at Paul Anderson, who, by might or main, sought to bring these as yet unsettled immigrants over into the English. On his side, Paul Anderson got additional water on his mill from this, to him, very extreme "Norwegian" attitude of the Synod pastors.

[25] There was possibly much to this. The teachers were undoubtedly poorly prepared for teaching and were unable to enforce the strict discipline that these emigrants from a highly developed cultural and literary nation demanded. There had been a tendency also on the part of some of these "eight-graders" to look down upon immigrants as being ignorant simply because they did not know the language of the land. Such highly educated and qualified men as these, several of whom had the master of arts degrees, naturally resented this.

[26] *Maanedstidende,* May, 1852, 5.

Synod did not so teach. This motion was aimed directly at Rev. H. A. Stub, who later confessed that he had erred on this point. Stub, who had been called away on a sick call that afternoon, was at this time spared further humiliation, although the Ellingian attack and Clausen's belligerent attitude on this point gave Stub no rest until he had finally set himself right in regard to this. Rev. N. Brandt did not vote because he thought that adequate safeguards had been put up, and that it was not for a small synod out here to add to the Symbols of the Lutheran Church. He might also have been out of sympathy with the motive or spirit back of the motion.

The committees, called for by the various motions above, were ready to report.

The committee on union with the Joint Ohio Synod reported [27] that it was deemed a matter of courtesy to reply to Prof. Reynold's address to the Synod, but no affiliation could take place at this time for two reasons: (1) This meeting is only of a preparatory nature; (2) The synod is not in possession of sufficient knowledge of the Joint Ohio Synod to make a proper estimate of its doctrine and practice. A motion to send delegates to this synod's meetings to study it at first hand was voted down on the plea that the money that would be required for this could be applied more profitably to the struggling mission work among the Norwegians. Possibly they realized to some extent what a tremendous influence synodical affiliations were to have on the character of the church.

Nothing illustrates the religious ideals of these earnest Christians more vividly than the resolutions adopted regarding ways and means of awakening spiritual life in the congregations.

1. The assembly considers it to be the duty of every Christian family to have the Bible in its house.
2. It is the duty of every householder or housewife to read mornings and evenings to their children and servants from the Scriptures, or other books of edification, and in connection with this have prayer and song.
3. It is the duty of every householder or housewife to keep a vigilant eye upon his or her children's or servant's conduct, that these do not take too many liberties; also, as far as possible, keep them from the common immoralities such as "night-hawking," public dancing parties, gambling parties, drinking bouts, cursing, swearing, breaking the Sabbath, and so on.
4. As far as time permits, the pastors should visit the homes to educate, encourage, and admonish their parishioners, and to institute, as far as possible, family devotion and family discipline.
5. In the absence of the pastor, the congregations should have devotional meetings, for reading the Bible or some of the best postils, for having inspirational and edifying conversations, or for having other forms of divine service.

[27] *Ibid.*, May, 1852, 6. A. C. Preus had a series of articles on this subject in *Maanedstidende* for July and August, 1852.

6. Sunday schools and other religious day schools should be instituted for the instruction and edification of the young.

7. Congregation libraries, containing not only edifying books of devotion, but also other good and useful publications, ought to be established.[28]

The committee to memorialize the legislature concerning the use of the oath in the marriage rite reported that they did not have sufficient information concerning the matter for intelligent action.[29] They recommended that the temporary church officials take action in the matter. It is interesting to note how vigilant these men—most of whom were from the ruling classes in Norway—were in regard to their liberties in America. There was good material for first-class citizenship in this group.[30]

The committee for the procuring and placing of missionary pastors reported that there was great need of a pastor to serve both New York and Chicago.[31]

The committee on temporary church government recommended [32] that a

> temporary church government be established, whose duty it shall be to take care of the matters which this convention might refer to it, receive the declarations of the congregations regarding the proposed constitution, deliver opinions concerning questions raised by the different congregations, issue a call in due season for the next meeting of the Synod, and carry on necessary correspondence from the adjournment of the present, to the opening of the next, Synod.[32]

This, then, concludes the work of this very important meeting. Evenings were usually given over to committee work, but when otherwise convenient, sermons were preached. One sermon by Rev. A. C. Preus, in which he deplored the split in the ranks of the Norwegian Lutherans in this country, brought a request for a colloquy

[28] *Maanedstidende,* May, 1852, 5.

[29] *Ibid.,* May, 1852, 7.

[30] Very few groups have more heroically defended the principle of the separation of Church and State than the Norwegian Lutherans. Dr. Oscar L. Olson, president of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, brings out the wonderful harmony existing between the *Augsburg Confession,* written in 1530, and the *American Constitution,* framed two and a half centuries later. He says: "The *Augsburg Confession,* which was composed more than 250 years before our *Federal Constitution* was framed, says: 'These two governments, the civil and ecclesiastical, ought not to be mingled and confounded. . . . We distinguish between the two powers, the civil and ecclesiastical, and recommend that both of them be held in honor as the highest gifts of God.' The *Constitution of the United States* says, in the *First Amendment:* 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.'" "These two statements," Dr. Olson adds, "are in such perfect agreement that they might have been written by the same individual." (*Lutheran Church Herald,* 1922, 1006 ff.)

[31] *Maanedstidende,* May, 1852, 7.

[32] *Ibid.,* May, 1852, 9.

by certain men who had left the Muskego congregation and joined Ole Andrewsen. The colloquy was fruitless, but it is interesting to note that the matter of union came up as well outside of the regular sessions as during them.[33]

In looking back at this meeting, one cannot but marvel at the careful and proper attention given all details. These six pastors were men who were capable of carrying on a meeting with the utmost precision, thanks to their careful training at the Royal Fredrik University, Christiania, where several of them had received their masters' degrees before taking up their theological studies; and thanks also to the fact that they were men who came from families in Norway that had been prominent for centuries in the affairs of Church and State. On the wild Western plains family connections were often scoffed at, probably in self-defense by those who had none; but even here it made a difference whether one had attained to poise and broad sympathies through family connections that for centuries had been accustomed to rule, or had merely assumed a bluff importance to hide his lack of the finer qualities of leadership, which similarly had been acquired through living in families which for centuries had been accustomed to obey rather than command. These men of education and good breeding could graciously yield on several points where those who were less assured of themselves could not yield without loss of dignity. This psychological factor, which had made it impossible for Eielsen to yield to his friends when they received some amount of education, made it possible for A. C. Preus, Stub, and (partly) Clausen to yield graciously in regard to such matters as paragraph two of the constitution. This high type of men, leaders both by virtue of family and education, had launched the synod, and had provided for the orderly exercise of its functions until the next convention should be convened.

But, of course, it was too much to expect that the carefully planned work of the convention should meet with universal approval among the Norwegians—they were by nature so critical that nothing short of a miracle could accomplish this. From several quarters, the results of these deliberations were attacked most bitterly both in general and in detail. Since the powerful laymen at Muskego had regarded this movement with disfavor from the first, they had taken only a perfunctory part in the whole proceedings, probably because the movement seemed to give promise of success regardless of whether they participated or not. A certain Sörly made a very bitter attack upon these endeavors to unite the congregations as being only one more effort to introduce clerical tyranny. In these attacks the rival Norwegian synods (i.e. Eielsen's and the Northern Illinois) joined most heartily.[34]

Efforts were made to bring about a better understanding with Eielsen immediately after the adjournment of the above-reported

[33] *Ibid.*, May, 1852, 10.
[34] *Ibid.*, September, 1852, 5.

meeting.[35] At first it seemed that some success would attend this, as Eielsen's Synod appointed a committee to meet with the temporary officers of the Koshkonong synod. These met June 21, 1852, at Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin, and agreed that "love and forbearance shall now take the place of the former strife and backbiting." [36] This was greeted as a joyful sign, but fourteen days had barely passed when Eielsen, on the fifth Sunday after Trinity, preached a Confirmation sermon at Spring Prairie at which the congregations of the "great mass" and their pastors were alluded to in a very plain and offensive manner.[37] After the short truce had thus been broken, the battle was waged with renewed energy, not least by Eielsen.[38] In this struggle it is only very natural that the deliberations of the convention of 1852, which was the most cherished product of the Koshkonong group's genius, should come in for very bitter attack.

While rival synods and others regarded the action of the convention of 1852 as a real menace—not to themselves, of course, but to the cause of true Lutheranism!—the Joint Ohio and other synods looked upon it with undissimulated admiration. For the *Lutheran Standard* of July 28, 1852, Dr. Reynolds furnished translations of very full excerpts from the constitution and by-laws of 1852, the paragraphs about doctrine, church order, church discipline, and parochial school especially being emphasized and approved.[39] The Ohioans were particularly desirous of having the Norwegians establish a professorship at Capital University, Columbus, Ohio. They commended their caution in taking plenty of time to write and test their constitution, and added that they had

> received a very favorable impression of the ability which is shown for self-government and for transacting business. . . . We surmise [they add] that this had its source not only in the intelligence of the pastors, but also in the political conditions and character of the Norwegian people, inasmuch as they very rightly have been called "the Yankees of the North," and have the freest government and most democratic spirit of all the peoples of Europe.

Consequently, the laymen are given a very full share in the government of the church. Of course, the *Standard* doubted the advisability of having the same pastor serve both New York and Chicago. Otherwise, it regarded the Norwegians and their church plans with genuine enthusiasm. These compliments were made much sweeter

[35] *Ibid.*, February, 1853, 10 in the President's report.
[36] *Ibid.*, February, 1853, 10. For resolution see *Maanedstidende*, July, 1852, 9.
[37] Reported by P. H. Strömme in an article signed Spring Prairie, August 16, 1852. His statements were corroborated by the signatures of Lars Johannesen Möen and Christopher Amundsen Grone.
[38] *Maanedstidende*, February, 1853, 10.
[39] *Ibid.*, September, 1853, 4. The *Missionary* reprinted Dr. Reynold's report.

to the Koshkonong group by the thought that the *Standard* had on a former occasion read the Northern Illinois group out of the Lutheran Church.

Back of this interest on the part of the Joint Ohio Synod was undoubtedly their hope that the Koshkonong group would fall in line with their ambitious plans which looked toward the leadership of middle-western Lutheranism. The Joint Ohio might have realized its plans had it not been for a small party of Saxons who in 1839 settled near St. Louis, Missouri, and in 1847, with Rev. Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Walther at the head, launched what became the powerful "Missouri" Synod. Walther's dominating personality was to exert an extraordinary influence on the Lutheran Church in America; as yet, however, the Norwegians were acquainted neither with Walther nor the Saxons.

In the meantime, the plans of affiliation stranded on other reefs. Like other early Lutheran synods, Ohio had shown indifference toward Lutheran doctrine and practice, in that it had sought union with the German-Reformed Church.[40] As proof that it had changed its practice on this point, Ohio now wished at every turn to impress upon the Norwegians the fact that it not only subscribed to the *Augsburg Confession*, but also accepted the other Symbolical writings in the *Book of Concord* as true expositions of the doctrines of the *Augsburg Confession*. Another point that worried the Norwegians was that the catalog of Capital University gave the impression that the Ohioans took a broad secular view of the work at their college and that they introduced Luther's *Catechism* and other religious instruction only as something extra. On the university board sat men who were not Lutherans, thus furnishing no guarantee for the appointment of Lutheran teachers.[41]

In 1852 a most valuable addition was made to the pastoral list. In this year Jacob Aall Ottesen came to take up the pastorate at Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Born in 1825, he became a candidate from Christiania University in 1849, and after three years as teacher at Nissen's Latin School, emigrated to his future field of useful labors in the state of Wisconsin.[42] A man of keen critical powers, and a dialectician with only one or two equals in the church, he naturally began from the very first to play an important part in the meetings of the Synod. Had his health permitted, he would undoubtedly have forged his way to the very highest positions of trust. As it was, he was editor of *Kirkelig Maanedstidende* for several years, secretary of the Synod, and, in spite of his emphatic refusal to serve, was elected to be professor of theology and president of the Eastern District of the Synod. He remained firm in his refusals in both cases, but this

[40] *Maanedstidende*, October, 1852, 8 and 9. For Ohio side see *Maanedstidende*, December, 1852, 7.

[41] *Ibid.*, October, 1852, 8.

[42] Biographies of him can be found in H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift, Livsbilleder*, and O. M. Norlie, *Norsk Lutherske Prester i Amerika*.

merely goes to show that the year 1852, though not rich in the number of pastors it brought, still was rich in the qualities that this one man brought.

In other respects the work of the Koshkonong group was growing apace. According to the president's report in February, 1853, thirty-eight congregations belonged to the group.[43] Of these, three were in Illinois, four in Iowa, and thirty-one in Wisconsin; of these, again, six had been organized since the meeting of 1852. Estimating very conservatively that there were three hundred members in each congregation, Rev. A. C. Preus found that there were 11,400 souls belonging to the churches. Not only were they growing in numbers and membership, but the congregations were also becoming more wealthy. New churches were dedicated at Rock Run and Hamilton;[44] and in the Koshkonong charge, the West congregation had built two fine new brick and stone churches, which were sixty-three by forty-two by twenty feet.[45]

As the congregations multiplied, the need for pastors was felt more keenly. To meet their growing needs, the congregations at Paint Creek, Norway Settlement, Clermont, and Little Iowa in Allamakee, Fayette, and Winneshiek Counties, Iowa, authorized the committee on pastors to procure for them a suitable man.[46] In this the committee was eminently successful, as it procured no less a man than the promising Ulrich Vilhelm Koren, who, with his wife, Elizabeth, arrived in America on Christmas day, 1853, too late to take part in the momentous meetings of 1853, to be sure, and yet in plenty of time to become the chief literary defender and expounder of the group's aims and ideals. Born December 22, 1826, at Bergen, Norway, he was graduated from that city's cathedral school in 1844, and from Christiania University as a candidate of theology in 1852. He taught for a year at Nissen's Latin School but soon became interested in America. Accordingly, in 1853, he was married to Else Elizabeth Hysing, was ordained, and emigrated to America, where he took up his abode at Washington Prairie, near Decorah, Iowa. Here he lived until his death in 1910. He was secretary of the Norwegian Synod, vice-president and president of the Iowa District of the Norwegian Synod, and from 1894 to 1910 president of the Norwegian Synod. For years he was the chief champion of the Synod's position and has been called the ablest statesman of the church up to the time of his death in 1910. In the course of the many battles he clearly, and in a very far-sighted manner, enunciated principles that should outlive his time and day. But, as above mentioned, Koren came too late to take part in the momentous meetings of 1853, though the news of his coming was very encouraging to the pastors and delegates.

[43] *Maanedstidende*, February, 1853, 11. The term "superintendent" was soon dropped in favor of a more common "president."

[44] *Maanedstidende*, August, 1852, 6 and February, 11.

[45] *Ibid.*, October, 1852, 13. [46] *Ibid.*, February, 1853, 10.

On February 5, 1853, the congregations had a meeting at East Koshkonong, at which were present the seven pastors: A. C. Preus, G. F. Dietrichson, H. A. Stub, C. L. Clausen, N. Brandt, H. A. Preus, and J. A. Ottesen. Besides these there were forty-two representatives from twenty-eight congregations. After having gone through preliminaries similar to those at the first meetings, A. C. Preus was reëlected temporary president. The constitution was taken up for renewed discussion, and in response to a request for possible changes nineteen such changes were handed in and given over to a committee. On February 10 the committee reported, and all that day and the next were consumed in the discussions. At A. C. Preus's suggestion, it was decided that the constitution should now be submitted to the congregations for approval, and that a meeting of those who subscribed should be called for October, 1853.[47] Unfortunately, *Maanedstidende* gives no further comments, but simply reprints the constitution which the congregations accepted. But Rev. H. Halvorsen has satisfactorily proved that the meeting decided upon at East Koshkonong was held at Luther Valley, Wisconsin, October 3-7, 1853.[48] At this meeting were present those who accepted the constitution, namely, the seven pastors and representatives from seventeen congregations. Thus was the work of organization completed, and what later was known as *The Norwegian Synod,* or simply the *Synod,* became a reality after four years of patient endeavor.

The constitution as finally adopted reads:

1. The name of the church shall be "The Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of America."

2. The doctrine of the church is that which is revealed through God's holy Word in the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, interpreted in agreement with the Symbolical Books or Confessional Writings of the Norwegian Church, which are: (1) *The Apostolic Creed,* (2) *The Nicene Creed,* (3) *The Athanasian Creed,* (4) the unaltered *Augsburg Confession* which was delivered to Emperor Charles V at Augsburg 1530, (5) Luther's *Small Catechism.*

3. This church acknowledges no one to be a clergyman except he be properly examined, rightly called, and given churchly ordination into the pastoral office.

4. In case a pastor, who brings testimonials which satisfy the church council that he is properly examined and rightly called, and that he had churchly ordination into the pastoral office, wishes to be admitted as a pastor into our synod from another church body, then he must submit to the same tests as the church demands of its other pastors, and must also take the Norwegian pastoral oath with such

[47] A very complete report of this deliberation is found in *Maanedstidende,* for February, March, and in an extra edition of the same paper for August, 1853.

[48] H. Halvorsen, *op. cit.,* 67-78. H. A. Preus, *Wisconsinisme,* 5, says it was at Koshkonong, but this is very likely a lapse of memory.

changes as the church determines. Such a test may be waived in the case of pastors from the evangelical Lutheran Churches of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

5. The *Ritual of the Church of Denmark and Norway* from 1685 and the *Altar Book* used in these kingdoms are recognized as binding by this church, but with such modifications as the Synod may determine.

6. The polity of the church shall be synodical-presbyterial, so that every other year a synod or church convention is held, this to be the church's highest authority.

7. The Synod is composed of the pastors of the church and the duly elected delegates from each congregation which is united with the church.

Note. The congregations that have no connection with the Synod, but whose doctrine and church order are in agreement with the Synod, are permitted to send delegates who are granted the right to make direct motions and at their introduction offer arguments why they should be adopted. The Synod can thereafter decide for itself whether these delegates shall be permitted to take further part in the discussion of their own motions.

8. The congregations connected with the Synod shall elect from their own midst delegates in the following proportions: For every one hundred confirmed members one representative is sent, yet in such a way that no congregations must send more than three. These delegates must present credentials from the congregations that they represent.

9. The Synod shall have the power: (1) to give general and special rules in all religious-ecclesiastical matters; (2) in the last instance to judge in all church matters; (3) from among the pastors of the church to elect a president for the church; (4) to elect a church council composed of three pastoral and three lay members.

10. The President is: (1) the chairman of the Synod; (2) one of the ordained members of the church council and its president; (3) and as such it devolves on him to carry out all the rules and decisions of the Synod and the church council and to execute the judgments of the Synod and the church council.

11. The duties of the church council are: (1) to keep an eye on the pastors' deportment and the execution of their official duties; (2) in the first instance to pass judgment in all religious-ecclesiastical matters; (3) when important matters demand it, to call an extraordinary meeting of the Synod. If there are any matters requiring attention, the church council meets twice a year on the third Wednesday in March and the third Wednesday in October, at such places as the president finds most convenient and concerning which he, through the secretary of the church council, must give due notice to all members of the church council as well as to the public in general. The deliberations of the church council are made public after each meeting.

12. When a congregation wishes to join the church, it shall send in an application to the president of the church council, this application to be signed by the congregation's board, consisting of the pastor and his assistants or deacons. In this application it must be specifically stated that the congregation subscribes to the constitution

of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and also to its other rules and regulations. It is, however, reserved to every individual congregation to have its own rules for its government, so long as these do not conflict with the constitution and regulations of the church. When a congregation wishes to sever its connection with the church, it must through its congregational board notify the president of the church council to that effect.

13. It is the Christian and churchly duty of every congregation belonging to the church to establish and maintain religious schools to secure for the young instruction in the fundamentals of Christianity.

14. Every question concerning the church's discipline and doctrine which is brought before the Synod for action, is decided in the following way: The delegates to the Synod elect from their midst a number equal to the number of clerical members present, who then jointly decide the matter by vote. In case of a tie, the president of the Synod casts the deciding vote.

15. With the exception of paragraph two and three, which forever shall remain unchangeable and irrevocable, and four, which can be changed only when three consecutive synod conventions have voted for the proposed change, this constitution or any part of it can be changed in the following manner: The proposed change shall be submitted to a convention of the church, and if this by a majority vote approves the change, then it shall within three months be communicated to all the congregations connected with the church through their president or board, and thereupon be taken up for renewed consideration at the following church convention; and if the proposal is again approved by a majority vote, it becomes a law.[49]

By-Laws

In the by-laws it was specified that the president of the synod (paragraph one), the church council (paragraph two), every pastor (paragraph three), and every congregation (paragraph four) shall keep a full record of all official correspondence and of all official acts, each in his (or its) own way. Then follows:

5. Every congregation of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of America shall have a congregational board, consisting of the pastor and his assistants. These assistants shall aid the pastor in all religious-churchly matters which concern the congregation. This board shall meet at the call of the pastor.

6. The pastor shall regularly visit the parochial schools and once a year give a public examination of the children in each of the congregation's school districts, also make annotation concerning this in his school protocol.

7. No pastor connected with the church can accept anyone as a member of his congregation, unless the applicant submit satisfactory testimonials from his former pastor, confess the doctrine of the church, and subscribe to its order.

[49] *Maanedstidende,* August, 1853, 12.

Note. Should it occur that an applicant is not in possession of an *attest* from his pastor and cannot procure same without very great difficulty, then the good report of two members of the congregation shall serve as an *attest* (i.e. certificate of good character).

8. No pastor connected with the church shall administer the Sacrament to any newcomer from Norway, Sweden, or Denmark, or to anyone who has moved in from other parts of America, if said person has lived within the congregation for over a year without joining it.

9. When a pastor withholds the Sacrament of the Altar from a member, then he must within eight days notify the president of the church council and also give the reason for such refusal. The pastor's assistants or congregational board shall likewise add their statement and opinion in the matter. The president of the church council shall submit the case to the church council, and in case this finds that the pastor has acted correctly, then he shall communicate the findings to the other pastors of the church. These must not thereafter admit such a member to Communion so long as this decision is not rescinded by a decision of the church council or the Synod. On the other hand, if the president of the church council finds the reason for exclusion doubtful or insufficient, he shall communicate this his opinion to the pastor and the congregational board. In case the pastor persists in the exclusion, this shall then be submitted to the church council for a decision at their first regular meeting. Both parties should appear before the council and, if this then finds that the pastor has acted rightly in the matter, it shall support the pastor in his stand.

10. No pastor of the church shall admit anyone to Communion concerning whom it is known that he willingly and with delight lives in one or more vices or sins of malice, unless he sincerely promises to better himself. But if one who is thus admitted once to Communion on such a promise continues to permit sin to rule over him, he shall henceforth not be admitted to the Sacrament, even though he promises betterment, so long as there is not a definite change for the better in his life.

11. The vices, on account of which Communion shall be denied, shall not only be such as are rare or uncommon, but such a denial should also apply to the more usual and common transgressions of God's commands; as, for instance, cursing and swearing, drunkenness, frivolous and unchaste speech, malicious backbiting, disobedience to parents, cheating in business transactions, etc. The pastor, in the performance of his office, should have no regard to persons or make distinctions in regard to sins, but merely consider whether the sin which he punishes is a ruling sin or a sin of malice, so that the transgressor lives in it knowingly, willingly, and with delight. In case the pastor is in doubt as to whether he shall exclude such a sinner from Communion, he should not take action before he has consulted his congregational board or gotten a decision in the matter from the church council.

12. When anyone is excluded from Communion, the pastor should not consider his duty as a shepherd of souls to have ceased over against the excluded sinner; he should, on the contrary, on every occasion seek to admonish and guide him into true conversion from

the error of his ways. When any signs of conversion appear, he should help him on the right way with a spirit of gentleness.

13. If anyone has a complaint against any of the church's pastors, then the complaint, which shall be signed by at least two witnesses who are members of one of the congregations in the church, shall be addressed to the president. At least fifteen days' notice shall be given both to the complainant and the defendant regarding the time when the matter shall come before the church council. In case either of the parties is dissatisfied with the finding of the church council, the case can be brought before the following synod convention. Such an appeal must be decided upon and made known to the church council within fifteen days after its decision was made known.

14. If the church council finds that the case against the pastor is of such a nature that the pastor ought to be suspended from his pastoral office, the suspension must be announced, not only to the pastor, but also to his congregational board, and to all the congregations which are united with the church. He must not perform any pastoral functions during the period of his suspension.

15. It shall devolve upon the church council, as the judges in the first instance, and the Synod, as the judge in the last instance, to see to it that the judgments are properly announced to the parties interested. A full account of the whole case shall accompany this announcement.

16. Every judgment of the church council which is not appealed shall be executed twenty days after its announcement.

17. When a pastor by a final judgment is deprived of his pastoral office, he shall henceforth not be accepted as pastor by any congregation connected with the church, unless the Synod decides otherwise.

18. In case members of the church council are accused they are to be judged by the Synod.

Special Synodical Decisions

1. The Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of America cannot henceforth acknowledge a baptism which is performed by persons who are not recognized by the church as properly examined, called, and ordained pastors, or a baptism which is performed by pastors in church bodies in which the covenant of baptism is not established, which rite it must regard as nothing more than an emergency baptism. The church will under the present circumstances not recognize any church covenant of baptism as having been established except this is later to be followed by confirmation, the confirmation examination to include the whole *Apostolic Creed* instead of merely comprising the second confirmation question.

2. Whereas, the Scriptures and the Symbolical books of our church everywhere very clearly teach that man's life on this side of the grave is his time of preparation and conversion, that it is the time of grace which must be bought, that it is the day of salvation, and,

Whereas, the Scriptures nowhere mention or teach that a person can after death come to conversion and salvation, if he died in impenitence and unbelief, but that the contrary is everywhere taught; therefore, be it

> Resolved, that we reject as very erroneous and dangerous doctrine every teaching concerning such a conversion after death, and that we as a church refuse to use all books teaching this doctrine, and exclude from our church all persons who teach these erroneous doctrines. This decision shall forever remain unchangeable and irrevocable.

This constitution was not above reproach and had to be changed in several respects. A contributor in Halvorsen's *Festskrift* calls attention to the fact that paragraph nine, dealing with church discipline, was in conflict with Matt. xviii.17, where the local congregation, not the synod, has final authority in matters of discipline. This was, therefore, later amended. The name of the church was changed in 1868 to be *The Synod for the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of America,* and was henceforth known as the *Synod* or *The Norwegian Synod.*[50] In 1868 the constitution was otherwise thoroughly revised and considerably lengthened, partly by introducing changes into the text, partly by adding a whole section or chapter, and partly by adding subdivisions under the old heads. Other changes had to be made when the Synod was divided into three districts in 1874. Since that time, districts have been added and other changes have been made, but through it all the venerable constitution has at least formed the solid groundwork for the Norwegian Synod's constitutional development and expansion.

At the end of 1853 we thus have three synodical organizations among the Norwegians: (1) *The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America,* for which Elling Eielsen and his friends had provided the *Old Constitution* in 1850; (2) Paul Anderson and his group which, in 1848, had joined the Franckean Synod only to withdraw and form, with Swedes and others, the *Northern Illinois Synod* in 1851; and (3) the Norwegian university group, which in 1853 organized the *Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of America,* later known as the *Norwegian Synod.* In religious fervor Eielsen excelled; in popular appeal and sensitiveness to popular desires, Paul Anderson's group was strongest; in churchliness and sturdy leadership, the Synod group ranked highest. Each group had its strong points, and it soon appeared that each group also had its vulnerable points. To these groups might be added a fourth, the Muskego laymen, who had become offended during the meeting at East Koshkonong in February, 1853, and had left in anger. Throughout the negotiations these laymen had done all in their power to block the union, but after their initial success in blocking Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson's proposed meeting in 1849, the work of union was carried on in spite of them. Two reasons for their obstructive tactics suggest themselves: (1) The Muskego leaders had been in full control at Muskego before the advent of pastors, and yielded very reluctantly at the advent of the pastors. (2) They were loathe to see the center of Lutheranism move from Muskego to Koshkonong. Try hard as he would, Rev.

[50] Also called *Wisconsin Synod,* particularly by its enemies.

H. A. Stub, the pastor at Muskego, was unable to get his congregation to join the *Norwegian Synod* in the face of the opposition from the powerful laymen. On account of the resulting friction, Stub resigned from the pastorate at Muskego in 1854.

CHAPTER VII

DIVERGENT SYNODICAL ACTIVITIES

1. Papers—Personalities—Synodical Issues

As the different groups are lining up for the various conflicts that seem more or less inevitable, we shall pause a moment to take an inventory of their arsenals of warfare. In eloquence each group had its Aaron; in wit and strategy each had its Jacob; in wisdom each had its Solomon; in patience and perseverance each had its Job. In these battles, word of mouth, direct action, and the printed page were the implements of warfare. Of the first, nearly all is lost; of the second, we shall have occasion to speak at the proper time; of the third, it is pertinent to say a few words at this juncture.

During this time a new element, the immigrant press, had become a factor with which to reckon.[1] While most of those who had been in America a few years could read English, they felt more at home with the newspapers that used a language which was still very dear to them. It is, moreover, a trait of the Norwegians that they trust their own countrymen almost to the utmost, and though some took advantage of this, seldom was this confidence betrayed. This psychological factor—present in most immigrant groups, no doubt—gave the press a position of great power. Unfortunately it was not always clearly realized that power should carry with it responsibility; some of these early newspapers, at any rate, stooped to pick up personal quarrels, in the course of which very indelicate things were said.

As early as 1847, thanks to the enterprise of Even Heg, a paper in the Norwegian language, called *Nordlyset* (The Northern Light), was issued at Muskego. With Even Heg as practically sole owner, James D. N. Reymert as part owner and editor, and Ole Torgerson as typesetter and compositor, the project got definitely under way on July 29, 1847, when the first modest issue of four four-columned pages appeared. By agreeing to accept the price of subscription in farm produce as well as in cash, the managers succeeded in placing two hundred names on the subscription list. Since many failed to fulfil their side of even this attractive proposition, the editor, Mr. Reymert, was forced to sell his stock to Heg and Company in 1848. This company again sold the paper in 1849 to Knud Langland and

[1] For the history of the early Norwegian American press see Carl Hansen, "Pressen til Borgerkrigens Slutning" in J. B. Wist, *Norsk Amerikanernes Festskrift*, 1914. Also taken up in part in J. A. Bergh, *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika*, 86, and in H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift*, 215.

O. J. Hatlestad, who moved the press to Racine, Wisconsin, and changed the name of the paper to *Demokraten.* Even under its changed name it did not survive more than a year and a half, the last number appearing under date of October 29, 1851.

Nordlyset, the first-born of the large and strong family of Norwegian American newspapers, is cherished, in spite of its premature birth and early demise, as a worthy precursor of its giant brothers who were better and more favorably born. Though its limited space often served as a medium for the expression of narrow and bigoted opinions about men and their personal affairs,[2] this paper, nevertheless, to some extent challenged its readers to constructive thought on political and religious issues in their new American homeland. In recognition of its political influence, James D. N. Reymert was elected to sit in the Wisconsin Constitutional Convention in 1847, and Langland, a later part-owner of the press, sat in the Wisconsin Assembly in 1860. In recognition of what the Norwegian American press, with very few exceptions, has been to the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, files of *Nordlyset* are now in the possession of Koren Library, Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, and of Luther Theological Seminary, Como and Pierce Avenues, St. Paul, Minnesota. The Seminary file of this rarest of all Norwegian American papers is declared unique by Prof. Theo. C. Blegen.[3] The Luther College file is even more complete.[4]

In 1850 another paper, *De Norskes Ven* (Friend of the Norwegians) appeared, but its span of life covered less than half a year. In that time it vainly tried to make its Whig ideas prevail against the Democratic position of its abler opponent, K. Langland. Langland's triumph was short-lived, however, as the Norwegians soon joined the Republicans in the stand of this party on slavery.

At the demise of *Demokraten,* the press equipment was divided between its owners, O. J. Hatlestad and K. Langland. With his portion of the press Hatlestad issued a religious monthly which he called *Kirketidende for den Skandinavisk Evangelisk-Lutherske Kirke,* or simply *Kirketidende* (Church Times). After a precarious existence at Racine, Wisconsin, the press was moved in July or August, 1853, to Norway, Illinois, where Hatlestad disposed of it to Ole Andrewsen. Andrewsen continued to issue the paper under its old name until about October, 1854. On December 4, 1857, the paper reappeared under the changed name of *Norsk Luthersk Kirketidende,*[5] with Ole Andrewsen as owner and Paul Anderson and O. J. Hatlestad as editors. This company was forced to discontinue the paper sometime after November, 1860.

[2] This Muskego organ contained frequent and bitter attacks upon Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson of Koshkonong.

[3] *Minnesota History Bulletin* for November, 1920.

[4] Karl T. Jacobsen, "The Library" in *Luther College Bulletin,* January, 1924.

[5] *Norwegian Lutheran Church Times.* Rare copies at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa.

Langland's portion of the press was destined to give much longer service. He sold his portion to the Koshkonong group of pastors, whose *Maanedstidende* (Monthly Times) is the oldest Norwegian Lutheran church paper in America, being several weeks older than Hatlestad's *Kirketidende*. At the time of the purchase (1852), the pastors were incorporated as the Scandinavian Press Association for the purpose of issuing both a secular and a religious paper. We shall take this up in detail.

In an article dated December 3, 1847, which appeared in *Nordlyset*, January 20, 1848, Rev. C. L. Clausen broached the idea of issuing a paper to be called *Norsk Luthersk Maanedsskrift*.[6] The paper should be in octavo (book) size, and should contain information regarding the Lutheran Church, its doctrines, polity, usages, and should also answer objections to the same; give reports of other Lutheran and Reformed bodies, their history, polity, doctrine, and other information; carry news items from the Church in Norway and other countries; print news from the mission fields; and have articles of edifying and informational character. Naturally, the reader might not agree with everything thus printed, but he is at liberty, in that case, to take the editor to task, so long as he does not attack such fundamentals as the Baptismal Covenant [7] and the Words of Institution of the Lord's Supper. Otherwise not even attacks on the church will be excluded, it being understood, of course, that the editor is free to make reply. Not only will such a paper prove exceedingly interesting, but at our stage of development, he said, it is also becoming absolutely necessary. While he felt that an abler man should take hold of this, his colleague, Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, he said, has absolutely refused to serve as editor for want of time. As soon as five hundred subscriptions at the rate of a dollar a year have come in, the paper will be issued.

Clausen received the hearty support of such men as K. Langland and others. The latter expressed his delight that such an eminently qualified man as Clausen was to take hold of this much needed work. In a great measure, he hoped, this would counteract the bitter party strife that was tearing at the vitals of every settlement. To show his sincerity, he sent in a subscription list containing the names of "most of the settlers" in his community.[8] In spite of this and other support, the coveted five hundred subscribers were not forthcoming, and for this reason, and possibly also because of Clausen's health, the idea was abandoned at this time.

On December 7, 1850, a new announcement was made that Revs. A. C. Preus, C. L. Clausen, and H. A. Stub would issue a *Maaneds-*

[6] That is, *Norwegian Lutheran Monthly*. This article was reprinted in the issues of *Nordlyset* for January 27 and February 3, 1848. He gives failing health and his desire to do something for the church as his reasons for undertaking it. The text of this letter is reprinted in Bergh, *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes historie i Amerika*, 83.

[7] A thoroughly Grundtvigian tenet which Clausen later recanted.

[8] *Nordlyset*, February 24, 1846.

tidende, beginning with January 1, 1851. On the last page of the first issue, which appeared, not on January 1, as announced, but in March, is a short announcement "which has appeared in both the Norwegian papers," [9] stating that *Maanedstidende* proposed to follow a program much like the one mapped out by Clausen above, and that the paper would be a monthly of twenty-four pages in octavo (book) size, the subscription price to be fifty cents a year.[10] During the first year of its existence, it was printed on the press of the *Demokraten,* Racine, Wisconsin, under the management of the three above-mentioned pastors. In April, 1852, *Maanedstidende* appeared with a title page saying that it is edited by "the pastors of the church" and printed by *den Skandinaviske Presseforening* (the Scandinavian Press Association), at Inmansville—another name for Luther Valley—Wisconsin. It is further explained in the same issue that five pastors, instead of three, have a share in editing the paper, as Rev. G. F. Dietrichson and Rev. H. A. Preus have now arrived from Norway. Even with its seven hundred to eight hundred subscribers, the announcement continues, the paper does not pay for itself; hence, after consulting men who know, they have decided to reduce the paper from twenty-four to sixteen pages. What is thus lost in quantity must be made up in quality; superfluous words, as well as superfluous articles, will be eliminated. Among the latter are mentioned replies to Hatlestad's *"Racinske" Kirketidendes* attacks upon the Synod and its pastors. Concerning other personal and impersonal matters which are brought up against us, they said, we have unanimously decided: "Let it pass." [11]

This program evidently met with great favor, although the paper had to be suspended for two years (August 1853-March 1855) because the press was employed to capacity in printing books.[12] When the paper reappeared in March, 1855, it was called *Kirkelig Maanedstidende* (Church Monthly), which name it retained until 1874, when it was made a weekly and given the name *Evangelisk Luthersk Kirketidende* (Evangelical Lutheran Church Times).[13]

Besides the above-mentioned publications, the Press Association issued a political paper called *Emigranten* (The Emigrant), of which the first number appeared January 23, 1852, with Rev. C. L. Clausen as the unwilling editor.[14] As early as August 27 of the same year, Clausen bids his readers adieu and commends his successor, Carl Martin Riise. After a year and a half, the latter was supplanted by

[9] Presumably *Demokraten* and *De Norskes Ven.*

[10] *Maanedstidende,* March, 1851. A complete file of this paper under its various names is found in Koren Library, Luther College, Decorah, Iowa.

[11] *Maanedstidende,* April, 1852.

[12] See introductory remarks to *Kirkelig Maanedstidende,* 1855, 2.

[13] For a detailed history of this official organ of the Norwegian Synod, see Laur. Larsen, "Vort Kirkeblad" (Our Church Paper), in H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift,* 215.

[14] C. L. Clausen says in the second number of the paper that he did not at all desire the editorship, but he was proposed and unanimously elected by the Press Association in spite of his protests.

K. Fleischer, who in turn would have been relieved had he not in 1857 delivered the Press Association from "pastoral domination" by contributing toward the resignations of Rev. G. F. Dietrichson and Rev. A. C. Preus. These internal struggles did not strengthen the Press Association; hence, the purchase of the press in 1857 by C. Fr. Solberg and its removal to Madison, Wisconsin, was a relief not least to Rev. H. A. Preus, who was still a member of the Association. For a long time the pastors had fully controlled a religious paper and had nominally controlled a secular paper.[15] Both were powerful factors in molding public opinion in those days when even very intimate things were discussed by the public press.

In the lapse indicated above, when the Press Association was so busily engaged in issuing religious books that it found no time for issuing *Maanedstidende,* it printed several books. *Emigranten* for February 4, 1853, announced that though the printing of Lars Linderoth's *Sermons* was somewhat delayed, those who had subscribed for the book could have it at reduced rates up to March 1. Two weeks later, February 18, it announced that the *Catechisms* and *A B C's* were just off the press, and that Saxtorph's abridged edition of Pontoppidan's *Explanation* would be ready for distribution at the end of the month. In 1854 the Press Association issued Wexels' *Bible History* and Guldberg's *Psalmebog* (Hymn-book); in 1855, the *Symbolical Books* of the Lutheran Church; and in 1856, Luther's *Large Confession* and *Smaa Fortällinger til Fadervor* (Short stories in connection with the Lord's Prayer). Besides this, the press did enough outside work for the State of Wisconsin and others to keep itself going financially. The Press Association thus did some very creditable, all-around work.

Hardly had *Maanedstidende* appeared in 1851 when O. Hatlestad set up his portion of the former *Demokraten* press, and issued his *Kirketidende* from Racine, Wisconsin.[16] From its first issue until its demise in 1854, this paper kept up a constant attack upon the pastors who founded the Norwegian Synod. Hatlestad being yet unordained, the "pastors," [17] as indicated by the introduction to the second volume of *Maanedstidende,* regarded him and his attacks with lofty disdain. But their unofficial spokesmen, the editors of *Emigranten* and others, entered into the lists with such zeal that nothing further could be desired. Provocations conveniently offered themselves to those who were looking for trouble. In order to "settle" some difficulties he had with the Press Association regarding some remains of the *Demokraten* press, Langland used his brother's-

[15] *Emigranten* was dubbed "the clergymen's paper" by its opponents, though Rev. A. C. Preus says that only one signed article by the clergymen had appeared in *Emigranten* even during the time *Maanedstidende* had been discontinued.

[16] A practically complete file of Hatlestad's *Kirketidende* is found in Koren Library, Luther College, Decorah, Iowa.

[17] Since the Koshkonong group of pastors did not as yet belong to a synod, they were referred to as the "pastors" (prestene) by their opponents.

in-law paper, *Kirketidende,* for a resounding blow at the Press Association, the membership of which largely consisted of pastors. J. D. Reymert, former editor of *Nordlyset,* stepped into the breach, and with *Emigranten* as an organ carried on a most lively newspaper feud with Langland, in which many very personal matters were intimately discussed. Although the pastors were only indirectly concerned, they had to bear the brunt of the attacks, as *Kirketidende* raised its guns over the heads of the "smaller fry" in the foreground and aimed them directly at the pastors who were trying to keep in the background in this scurrilous feud.

Kirketidende thus sent out many appeals and warnings against the pastors. Here is one by an anonymous writer found in the issue for January 27, 1852: "My Norwegian countrymen in America! What think ye? Are ye still minded to establish such an 'Iberotisk'—idiotic—(we could well say theatrical) church body, also here on the noble soil of freedom, equality, and human freedom." The article goes on to denounce the "pastors" for imprisoning Hauge: the "pastors' " prophets, Grundtvig and Wexels, possibly want this event buried! In the issue for February 23, 1852, this clarion call is issued:

> O ye Haugeans and our other Norwegian brethren who at the present time have the least solicitude for the eternal welfare of your souls! Ye have emigrated from Norway, and have set your feet on the noble soil of human freedom—America—do ye still wish with downcast eyes to permit yourself to be led by blind and inexperienced shepherds of souls? Do ye still wish to follow in the heels of the natural-minded, puffed-up, proud, haughty, lazy, and stingy Norwegian State church pastors? Assuredly ye are indifferent to your souls' and your offsprings' welfare!

In the issue for July 2, 1852, the question is asked: "Should a congregation in this land of religious freedom accept an ungodly and unconverted pastor?" This question is pertinent in view of the denunciation hurled against the pastors that they were unconverted and unregenerate men, blind leaders of the blind. On April 5, 1852, *Kirketidende* treated its readers to a real salvo at the "pastors" both in prose and poetry. "What a face," a "Lutheran" says, "would not Luther make if he now visited the so-called Lutheran State Church? Do ye believe, brethren, that he would acknowledge it as his church, as his faith and doctrine? ? Let me hear you once again! ! Answer me! . . . From blind leaders free us, O, God! ! !"

The general tenor of the conflict was not improved by outsiders who joined in on both sides. Here was an opportunity for those who from Norway had a real or supposed grievance against the clerical estate; to these the very name "clergyman" meant nothing else than "tyrant." [18] Others felt that the pastors were becoming

[18] For the social-religious-political revolt in Norway see above, Chapter I. Dietrichson had not been a reassuring factor to those who had once gone through—and won—the fight for personal freedom against the estates.

too "important" and gladly undertook to trim them down. Would-be leaders saw their prestige wane before these men of undoubted poise and ability. And then there is that opposition of flesh and blood that any man of God expects to find in natural man. On the other hand, the "pastors" and their lieutenants were possibly too ready to take up the gauntlet, often entering into fights from which they could have retired without loss of prestige. In fairness to all contestants, it must not be forgotten that they felt very keenly their duty to witness for the truth, lest by being silent they become partners in another's sins. In a general way it might be said, however, that the "pastors" were fighting the "Samaritans" with *Emigranten,* and were peacefully building the walls of Zion with *Maanedstidende.*[19] Hatlestad's *Kirketidende* ended its bilious existence in 1853; the press was then moved to Norway, La Salle County, Illinois, and sold to Ole Andrewsen, who issued *Kirketidende* till the end of 1854. In 1857 Paul Anderson and O. J. Hatlestad began to issue *Norsk Luthersk Kirketidende* from Andrewsen's press at Leland, Illinois. This survived a few years.

The outbursts just considered were, of course, occasioned chiefly by church jealousies. Back of *Maanedstidende* and, in a way, of *Emigranten,* stood the Norwegian Synod, while back of *Kirketidende* stood Ole Andrewsen (its owner after 1853), P. Anderson and O. J. Hatlestad (its editors), the Franckean Synod, and the Northern Illinois Synod. During this time Eielsen had to depend on word of mouth to bring before the people his views on all these questions. Insofar as *Kirketidende* attacked the "pastors," it might afford Eielsen some comfort, though Eielsen was not genuinely interested in seeing the men who treated him so badly at Middle Point carry away a great deal of spoils from the field. True enough, Rev. P. A. Rasmussen, of Eielsen's camp, issued a paper called *Kirkelig Tidende* (Churchly Times) from Lisbon during the years 1856 to 1861. But for Eielsen, this project became a viper in his own bosom, as Rasmussen had no sooner started his paper than he began to criticize the *Old Constitution,* bringing on a definite break between the two almost at once. In this newspaper feud Eielsen thus remained relatively inactive, for very obvious reasons.[20]

Since coöperation of any kind between these rival factions was out of the question, the opposition could not aid and abet its enemy by using texts printed by the Press Association. Although the Press Association already had issued Guldberg's *Psalmebog* (Hymn-book), Ole Andrewsen, with his *Kirketidende* press at Norway, Illinois, found it necessary to reissue the book, taking care to make the only

[19] Carl Hansen, *op. cit.,* 18, says: "As long as Clausen was the responsible editor of *Emigranten,* the battle seems to have been waged principally by the opposition."

[20] Dr. O. M. Norlie has heard reports about a certain *Organ* which Eielsen is supposed to have issued as a monthly from 1856 to 1866. Since no reference is made to this *Organ* either by contemporaries or by Eielsen's two biographers, further corroboration of these reports is awaited with interest.

change he dared to make—in the binding. Under the same circumstances Ole Andrewsen reissued Pontoppidan's *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed* (Truth unto Godliness). There was to be no "pastoral" taint on the books Ole Andrewsen and his friends distributed!

Rev. P. A. Rasmussen was always more original and certainly more constructive. Somewhat later than its previous venture, hence under somewhat different circumstances, Rev. Rasmussen organized, 1860, the *Lisbon Norwegian Lutheran Association for the Publication of Christian Books of Instruction and Edification.* The Lisbon Association, as it was called, issued Rosenius's *Forklaring over Fadervor* (Explanation of the Lord's Prayer) and *Frelsens Olie* (The Oil of Salvation). Besides these, Rasmussen issued Johan Arndt's *True Christianity,* which he had translated from German to Norwegian while teaching school at Lisbon.

Though there was admittedly much spite work in connection with these early publication ventures among the Norwegians, nevertheless they show that the owners and editors of the papers were both enterprising and courageous. It was inevitable, in one way, that there should be a clash between these presses, as the field was entirely too small to carry all these enterprises at once. American politics also were undergoing swift changes in the years between 1850 and 1860, and this circumstance acted as an exciting factor among the Norwegians, who have always taken an intelligent and independent stand on political questions. Caught in the surging currents of conflicting public opinion, it is no wonder that these settlers, whose sensitive Viking instincts were alert to every wind charged with the smell of battle, should become restless. Thanks to their inbred independence of judgment, and thanks to the powerful spiritual influences that were brought to bear on them, the Norwegians not only retained their moral and spiritual health, but through the constant challenge of divergent choices were made spiritually robust and intellectually sane.

For want of a real issue, the Northern Illinois element could make no real headway against the Synod pastors by mere personalities. Not so with the Eielsen faction, however, among whom Rasmussen soon became the master mind. The conventions of 1852 and 1853 had taken the wind out of Eielsen's sails, as the revised Synod constitution had removed the traces of Grundtvigianism which Eielsen had been able to attack most effectively in the constitution of 1851. Like Eielsen's constitution of 1850, the Synod condemned Wexels' *Explanation.*[21] The Synod further removed the offensive Grundtvigian clause from its second paragraph; but Eielsen retained his first paragraph, which placed the Confessions on an equality with the Bible, and hence was construed as being even worse than Grundtvigian. As for the general tenor of the two constitutions, Eielsen's constitution was possibly less Grundtvigian high-churchly than the

[21] Cf. Eielsen's *Old Constitution,* paragraph 10, and the Synod's *Special Synodical Decisions.* That the *Synodical Decisions* aimed at Wexels is definitely stated by Clausen in *Maanedstidende,* July, 1851.

Synod constitution, but it was in great danger of going to the opposite extreme in its condemnation of usages which are sanctioned by Article VII of the *Augsburg Confession*. Both constitutions had their grave faults, but if it came to a choice between them, the Synod constitution had fewer of the gross errors that characterized Eielsen's. But it could not be expected that the supporters of either constitution should pass the gulf of prejudice fixed between them and go over to the other side; consequently each party had to be blind to the faults of his own constitution and very alert to the faults of the other.

An issue that was very dear to the hearts of the Haugeans was the opposition to any changes in the religious texts. Professors Gisle Johnson and Carl Paul Caspari, of the theological faculty at Christiania, launched a vigorous attack on the Grundtvigian conception of the age and authority of the *Apostles' Creed,* in the course of which Caspari did some valuable research. The Haugeans rallied to the support of the professors, and since these came out of the fight with some glory, the Haugeans also shared in this. Once Grundtvigianism was routed, the changes introduced into the textbooks by the Grundtvigian Wexels became thoroughly odious and were thrown out in Norway. Lest they be despoiled of the fruits of this victory, the Haugeans were nervously alert to any new outbreak of Grundtvigianism. The wary Haugeans accused Stub of Wexelsism, or neo-Grundtvigianism, because he not only had Wexels' books on his study shelves, but he had held, moreover, that the heathen might be converted after death. Under the circumstances, Stub's vote in 1851 against the motion rejecting this doctrine aroused a very lively discussion, not only in America, but also in Norway.[22] Although A. C. Preus hastened to explain that he had not put Stub in the right light in his report of the meeting of 1851, seeing that Stub believed—had not taught—that there might be a conversion after death for the heathen who had never heard the Gospel—not for everybody [23]—these explanations failed to satisfy the opposition, which evidently regarded these distinctions as mere subterfuges. In the popular mind, Stub *was* a Grundtvigian; that matter was settled.

As a consequence Stub had some trouble in Muskego, his Grundtvigianism being one of the contributing factors that brought on his resignation from the congregation there in 1854.[24] At Port Washington he likewise had some trouble, the upshot of which was that eleven members left his church and found a ready welcome in Rasmussen's and Eielsen's camp. Finally, to rid himself of the increasing load of opprobrium that was heaped upon him, not least by contributors to Rev. P. A. Rasmussen's *Kirkelig Tidende,* Stub made

[22] See Rev. C. L. Clausen, "Synodalbeslutning Nr. 3," in *Maanedstidende,* July, 1851, 18 ff.

[23] *Maanedstidende,* April, 1851, 14 ff.

[24] Hatlestad, *Historiske Meddelelser,* 35, 36. Also A. Jacobsen, "Mödet i Muskego Skolehus," in Hatlestad, *Kirketidende,* December 22, 1852.

a full retraction in 1860, saying: "I am really happy also to state in public print that I have long ago, by the gracious enlightenment of the Holy Spirit through the Word, learned that my former views were false and, that if carried through to their necessary consequences, they would lead to a doctrine teaching universal conversion after death." At the time in question he had never taught publicly regarding the conversion of the heathen after death, as by the very nature of the case, there was no occasion to do so.[25] The net result of this early skirmish was that Rev. H. A. Stub had to retire from a position in which he was exposed to a crossfire from his own as well as from the enemies' lines.

Another victim of similar circumstances was Rev. C. L. Clausen. Through the persistent attacks of Eielsen and others, Clausen's position at Muskego a few years earlier had likewise become intolerable. As long as his own camp was made up of the thorough Grundtvigian Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, and the moderate Grundtvigian Rev. H. A. Stub, some sort of solidarity existed in Clausen's own ranks. But on the arrival of Rev. H. A. Preus, not only was this solidarity broken, but Clausen was attacked both by his own and the enemy forces. Clausen's impulse seems to have been to run away from the whole thing, especially since his health was not of the best. After his humiliation at the revisions of the constitution of 1851, Clausen was rather lukewarm toward the new-formed body and especially toward some of the new leaders in the Synod. When his health also failed him he retired from the active ministry in 1853, and took up colonization work at St. Ansgar, Iowa. At this the other pastors took offense, evidently regarding it as an attempt to dodge the issues that were outstanding between them. When Clausen in 1861 applied for re-admission into the Synod, he had to make a full retraction. Accordingly, at the Synod meeting at Rock Prairie, Wisconsin, he confessed

> that he had sinned in that a few years earlier he had resigned from the pastorate. Further, he had to confess that through inner struggles and help from his fellow-pastors, but above all by the grace of God, he had learned to see that the so-called "churchly conception," which he formerly had held and which regards the three *Apostolic Articles of Faith* as inspired as well as the Holy Scriptures, was a false and dangerous error, which he must now condemn both in himself and in others, although he believed that there also among those who were committed to this error were upright Christians. But he regarded his error in this matter as a great sin of which he heartily repented, and prayed God and men to forgive him.[26]

Whatever else might be said, one cannot but marvel at the great-souled confessions that not only Stub and Clausen, but also others of the Synod pastors, made. Intervening between the first appear-

[25] *Kirkelig Maanedstidende,* 1860, 285 ff.
[26] *Ibid.,* 1861, 234.

ance of these errors and their clean-breasted confession is a period of agitation in which the very foundation work of the young church was severely tested. Apparently some of the "pillars" of the church were beset by certain tendencies, that, like wood-borers, eventually would have perforated the whole structure and caused its ruin unless checked. While opponents gloated over the fact that they had forced their foes to retire from certain exposed positions, the friends of these men thanked God that they had now come to see the truth, and, by submitting to the honest demands of truth, had taken the steps that freed their group of a danger and a liability. When several of its pastors became confessed errorists, confidence was possibly shaken in the Synod for a time; but it soon developed that these confessions possibly could never have been occasioned had not the Synod's own leaders given a hearty response to the truth, even though it was tactlessly and irritatingly presented by the opposition. It takes great men to confess; greater men to judge dispassionately and fairly for the good of the cause for which they would give their very lives.

But heresy hunting has always proved itself to be a dangerous sport. And it was the Haugeans who took the lead. Both Eisteinsen and Brohaugh, on the one hand, and Hatlestad, on the other, speak of the laymen as "loyally standing guard also against this (Grundtvigian) conception," and that "we can thank the laymen that this did not take root";[27] that "these sincere Christians, who not only understood the true doctrine . . . but would not yield one iota of the saving truth," became aware of the fact that "the Norwegian pastors held these false conceptions."[28] Within the Synod itself there also were laymen who considered their class as the sole defenders of the true faith. Thus Gulbrand Myhre, at the organization meeting of 1852, stated that "false doctrine had always been refuted by the laymen," hence laymen should have preponderating influence in the church council.[29] Eielsen, who was always the spokesman of an untrammeled lay activity, capitalized the laymen's zeal for orthodoxy to the utmost, giving his own party much credit that did not necessarily belong to it, as the Synod pastors were certainly also on the alert against false doctrine. Eielsen was soon to learn this to his sorrow.

These personal controversies were supplemented by synodical relations that must be considered to be more or less official. Here also short periods of rest were enjoyed: throughout it all there was a great deal of friendly intercourse between certain of the warring elements.

No close surveillance was necessary to detect that Rev. A. C. Preus, president of the Norwegian Synod, had weak places in his armor. In 1851 he wrote a series of articles in *Maanedstidende,* in

[27] *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed,* 70.
[28] O. J. Hatlestad, *op. cit.,* 36.
[29] *Maanedstidende,* April, 1852, 11.

which Eielsen and the laymen discovered six statements which certainly bordered on Grundtvigianism. These were sufficiently definite to make it necessary that Rev. H. A. Stub, in 1853, as a member of Preus's synod, hence a partner to all of Preus's errors, answer for them. These points were:

> (1) The foundation of the Church is Baptism and the *Apostolic Creed;* (2) the Creed must accompany the Word as a key which opens the secrets of the Word; (3) the Church is a collection of all the baptized; (4) belief in the Church; (5) the Church and the Communion of Saints are two distinct articles of faith; (6) the essence of the Church consists of 'the Gospel in the World and Sacraments." [30]

Since these points of doctrine are all set forth in the Third Article of the *Apostolic Creed,* a controversy about that article was unavoidable. In this struggle also, Eielsen and the laymen found their weapons laid ready to hand by the controversy in Norway between the Haugeans and Wexels. As in the Arian controversy where one letter (the *i* in the homoousios—homoiousios) became the floodgate against heresy, so now the letter *d* should serve an equally important purpose. It was thought that orthodoxy could be preserved if all anti-Wexelsians would use the indefinite article *en* (a, one) instead of the definite *den* (the) before *holy Christian Church.*[31] The *den* (the) can be made almost demonstrative in force, and then it points out *the* Church as an object of faith. But since the Church, in the eyes of the Ellingians, was composed of "the great mass," comprising more unbelievers than believers, they chose to put into the term *almindelig* the idea that the Church was "unclean" rather than "universal." [32] It was furthermore an offense in Eielsen's eyes that men like Rev. A. C. Preus and others, contrary to synodical decisions— for which Eielsen did not care a fig of course—used Saxtorph's *Abridged Edition* of Pontoppidan's *'Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed"* instead of the *dubbelte* (i. e. dobbelte, double, larger) *Explanation* that Eielsen regarded as the sine qua non.[33]

In the ensuing struggle, Eielsen was curtly dismissed by the Preuses, who persisted in quoting Winer's *Greek Grammar,* the Latin footnotes in Guericke's *A Manual of Church History,* and the Latin version of the *Augsburg Confession.* It consequently devolved upon Rev. P. A. Rasmussen, who had taken a one-year course in theology

[30] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1861, 287. From A. C. Preus in *Maanedstidende,* 1851.

[31] The point is not so evident in the English where *the* is used in the *Creed.* In German we have something similar, as *ein* can mean *a* or *one* just as *en* can have both meanings.

[32] The Norwegian word *almindelig* has both meanings in a vulgar popular, but not in theological, usage. See H. A. Preus's article against P. A. Rasmussen in *K. Maanedstidende,* 1855, 152.

[33] Cf. above, 40, and *Maanedstidende,* October, 1852, 13.

at the "Missouri" Synod's Seminary at Fort Wayne, Indiana, to carry on the fight in the clarified air of theological erudition, where Eielsen could not get his breath. Though not eminently qualified for this task, Rasmussen had at least obtained some knowledge of the classical languages, and moreover, had witnessed at close range the terrific battle that from 1848 and on was being fought between the "Missouri" and the Buffalo (Lutheran) Synod, in which Prof. Walther demolished one after another of Buffalo's strongest tenets about the Church.[34] When the Preuses opened fire with the heavy artillery of Prof. Carl Paul Caspari, the great Norwegian scholar, and showed from the text and the history of the *Symbol* that their version of the *Creed* at least was not wrong, Rasmussen returned the fire with arguments that were a rehash of the popular, but not very learned, arguments of the Ellingians in America and the Haugeans in Norway. To some extent, Rasmussen also found Walther's arguments against the Buffalo Synod serviceable. By this strange concatenation of circumstances, Caspari's anti-Grundtvigian researches were used as a defense against the anti-Grundtvigians,[35] and, on the other hand, Rasmussen, the later pronounced anti-"Missourian," used what he could of the "Missouri" arguments against what he regarded as the high-church Grundtvigian element in the Synod. It was thus Rasmussen who first counterpoised "Missouri" orthodoxy against Norwegian State Church orthodoxy.

Once the struggle had been elevated to a more scholarly plane, it soon became evident that there were points of agreement as well as disagreement. As the opponents were driven into concessions on both sides, the gulf separating them became so narrow that both sides had hopes of complete agreement in case they could have a personal conference. Such a one was accordingly held at Spring Prairie, Wisconsin, June 5, 1855, between Rev. H. A. and Rev A. C. Preus of the Synod and Rev. P. A. Rasmussen and Rev. E. Eielsen of the Ellingians. According to Rasmussen's report in the "Missouri" Synod organ *Der Lutheraner,* Elling Eielsen was elected president and Rasmussen secretary.[36] In their report of the conference [37] the Preuses take a very optimistic attitude, saying that there is a world of difference between Eielsen's Synod now and formerly. This great change for the better was credited to Rasmussen and the better elements in Eielsen's Synod.

There was indeed cause for optimism. The conference had evidently steered clear of the reef on which other conferences had been

[34] See W. H. T. Dau, *Ebenezer,* 117, for this controversy.

[35] That these researches turned out contrary to Caspari's original purpose afforded the Synod leaders some comfort at this stage when it seemed as though they would be forced to defend Wexels's Grundtvigian texts of the Third Article of the *Creed.* They were too shrewd to be trapped into a general defense of Wexels, however.

[36] October 23, 1855. This report was to cause some trouble, as we shall see.

[37] In *K. Maanedstidende,* 1855, 107.

stranded by giving the question of Eielsen's ordination a wide berth for the time being.[38] Elling's group, of which Rasmussen was the spokesman, accused the Synod men of changing the *Symbol* to read *den* instead of *en* before *Church* in the Third Article. This might lead to the conclusion that a person, in a demonstrative way, could point to a certain local visible church and say "this is *the* Church." To this the Preuses replied that they had never intended to draw such a conclusion; indeed, if they had seen how much trouble it would cause, they would never have used *den.* This much conceded by the Synod men, they next had to answer the charge that they had made a further edition to the *Symbol* by inserting *almindelig* (universal or catholic). Rasmussen had to concede that the word had been used from early Christian times up to Luther's time; that Luther used *universal* in his Latin *Catechism* and *Christian* in his German *Catechism;* that Herman Francke used *universal* but not *Christian;* and that Pontopiddan used both *universal* and *Christian.* Rasmussen further conceded that it was of no great importance whether or not they used the word *almindelig,* so long as they admitted that the Church was spread over all the world and not restricted to a single place. This, the Preuses report, is a marked advance, as the Ellingians had declared the Synod congregations using this word—which did not appear in the Ritual, by the way—to be "unclean" and the children baptized with this formula to be baptized under the sign of the devil instead of the sign of the cross.[39] The question next came up as to whether one should say *believe* the Church or *believe in* the Church. Rasmussen conceded that neither formula excluded belief in the invisible Church—as he seems to have claimed at first—but that belief in the invisible Church was involved in both. He further had to concede that one must believe the visible as well as the invisible or else plunge into the Donatistic error of making the Church include only the pure persons who belong to the invisible Church. This latter doctrine was specifically taught in paragraph two of Eielsen's *Constitution.* Rasmussen entered a protest against the teaching that one becomes a partaker with Christ as soon as he belongs to the visible Church. In reply, Rev. A. C. Preus's explanation at Koshkonong of the words *believe the . . . Church* was cited, at which Rasmussen declared himself to be satisfied on this point.[40] On his part, Preus said that since this expression was subject to misunderstanding and consequently

[38] In the *Synodical Report* of 1855, 12, Clausen complains that several conferences have been broken up at the mere mention of this point, adding that the only answer Eielsen gave was to refer to documents supposed to be at Janesville, Madison, and other places. Eielsen, he said, could not see the reasonableness in the request that he legitimate himslf as a pastor. All Eielsen did was to challenge them to disprove that he was a pastor.

[39] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1855, 108.

[40] *Der Lutheraner,* October 23, 1855, 44. This was a protest against the "dead," "mass" Christianity that Eielsen always contended had the upper hand in the Synod, the inheritor of State Church Christianity.

gave offense, he would henceforth not use it.[41] Rasmussen further protested against the attempt to distinguish sharply between *Communion of Saints* and *Holy Christian Church,* the first, according to Luther, being an interpretation of the latter.[42] The Preuses replied that both were essentially the same and no sharp distinction need be made so long as it is clearly kept in mind that one believes in the visible as well as the invisible Church, the object of those who wished to make one link out of these two having been to emphasize faith in the invisible Church only.

Seven other points of great historic significance were then brought up but not discussed at any great length. These were:

> 1. Absolution. 2. That false doctrine was the only valid cause for leaving one church and joining another. 3. That it was a Donatistic illusion to attempt to have a pure Church on earth, as Eielsen's *Old Constitution* called for. [Rasmussen had the pleasure of announcing that the Donatistic clause had been removed from the *Old Constitution,* chiefly through his instrumentality, at a meeting at Lisbon, Illinois, in June, 1854.] 4. That each one could do as he pleases in regard to wearing the clerical gown—a tremendous concession, they said, as paragraph six of Eielsen's *Old Constitution* had denounced the long clerical gowns as contrary to Scripture, or at least as not commanded in Scripture, and for either reason to be shunned. Funeral ceremonies, dedication of churches, and so on, are beautiful rites against which no objections are raised. 5. Björn Hatlestad should have been censured by his fellow-Christians in Eielsen's church for saying that, for the sake of the salvation of their souls, true Christians should leave the Synod and join Eielsen. 6. In case Olaus Nielsen had said that Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and not the Word, was the two-edged sword, he erred. The Preuses thought, however, that Nielsen was speaking of the Word in his articles. 7. In prayer meetings, not more than three persons should offer prayer in one evening.

As some of the hopeful signs, Preus mentioned that the Lisbon meeting in 1854 had declared itself to be in favor of establishing an educational institution, whereas, before, Eielsen had asserted that "the one who has been to a higher institution of learning could not be anything else than a false prophet and worldly-minded."[43] At a second session at Spring Prairie, Eielsen's group rejected the doctrine that the inner, or internal, call to the ministry was sufficient, and added that a person should also have an outer, or external, call from a congregation or its representatives before he be ordained—also a great concession, they said, when one considers Eielsen's somewhat general disregard of the external call in former years.

[41] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1855, 109.

[42] Clausen repeatedly introduced motions that this distinction be made, but he received very little support for his views. See e.g. *Report* of Synod, 1855, 6 ff.

[43] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1855, 110.

Peace was assuredly in sight when these disturbing factors were thus put out of the way. Eielsen had certainly stretched himself to the limit—or had Rasmussen done this for him?

The meeting closed with mutual felicitations. The Preuses said that in all essentials there was unity and that a union was extremely desirable, as by a union greater efforts could be set forth in counteracting the sects. Rasmussen deplored the many church controversies, saying that beginners in Christianity often were taken away from the main issue of the salvation of their souls, entering prematurely into polemics instead of into the work of sanctification. The Preuses left the meeting in peace, while Eielsen's Synod completed its synodical deliberations.[44]

Concessions had thus been made on both sides and some progress had been made, but the parties were not ready for a union, judging by the reports each made of the meeting. In these each side minimized its own concessions and featured those made by the opposition. The Preuses, for instance, were very much gratified at the advances made by the Ellingian group under Rasmussen's leadership, and if only Rasmussen and the Ellingians would acquire some more Christian humility, it would be only a question of time when their synod would be dissolved and all of its members would come over to the Norwegian Synod. In his report to *Der Lutheraner* Rasmussen played up certain personal tilts in which he had gotten the best of the Preuses. Since he had not yet begun to issue a paper from his printing establishment, he issued for the benefit of the Norwegian public a pamphlet of some fifteen pages,[45] in which he assumed an attitude more radical than ever on all the points conceded and gave an especially perverse report on the Synod's conception of the word *almindelig*. He also made some charges that greatly incensed the Preuses. Rasmussen's report appeared first and electrified the Norwegian Synod more thoroughly than had anything hitherto in the course of its young life.

The Preuses each made a hot reply in *Kirkelig Maanedstidende*,[46] in which they expressed their pained surprise at Rasmussen's action. Epithets were heaped upon Rasmussen, whose action could not be strongly enough characterized. Just why Rasmussen had written as he did was a puzzle to H. A. Preus; he could not clearly see

[44] *Der Lutheraner*, October 23, 1855, 44 ff. One of the synodical decisions was to push the school project that Rasmussen had started at Lisbon in the spring after having been delayed, as he said, altogether too long by the translation and publication of Johan Arndt, *True Christianity*. A church paper and a publishing house were among the other projects discussed.

[45] *Forhandlinger i det paa Springprairie awholdte Aarsmöde den först Mandag og tvende felgende Doge i Juni Naamd 1855*. Copies of this are extremely rare. Parts of it have been imbedded in the works of opponents. This was part of his printed synodical *Report*.

[46] A. C. Preus, "Til Hr. P. A. Rasmussen. Du skal ikke sige falsk Vidnesbyrd mod din Näste" in *K. Maanedstidende*, 1855, 112; H. A. Preus, "Tilsvar til Hr. Rasmussen i Anledning af hans Skamskrift: *Forhandlinger i Aarsmödet paa Springprairie, Juni, 1855*," in *K. Maanedstidende*, 1855, 133.

whether it was from implacable hatred or from a desire to regain the good will of the Ellingians, who had possibly accused him of being too friendly toward the Synod "pastors." But whatever the motive, H. A. Preus finds in this pamphlet a rehash of all the old charges against the Synod, some of which, as for instance that the Synod taught a conversion after death, were miserably obsolete. Rasmussen's conception of the Church was Jewish, he charged, making only the children of Abraham after the blood true members. If Rasmussen says that only a select few are predestined, so that God offers his grace merely in sham to others who are already slated for damnation, then he has imbibed too much of the spirit of the Reformed churchmen who for a time had received such friendly treatment in Elling's camp.[47] Rasmussen replied in kind, getting not only all the space he wanted, but every other possible help from *Den Norske Amerikaner* (the Norwegian American), which was started in 1854 by all the forces opposed to *Emigranten* and the Synod "pastors" in general.[48] No serious effort was made by either side to keep the controversy from degenerating into personalities; both sides felt they were personally injured, and in order to vindicate their personal honor they had to make their opponents seem odious. Fortunately, no question of principle was injected into this controversy, though every conceivable subject was summarily discussed.[49]

As a result of the heat engendered in this controversy, the Synod, at its meeting on October 1-3, 1855, proposed that it would have nothing further to do with Eielsen's group. In spite of every effort on the Synod's part, the leaders said, Eielsen remained obdurate. A number of conferences had been flat failures, and after each there had been more bitterness than ever. And when this last conference ended well, the agreements were not only disregarded, but the old charges, that had all been admitted to be false, were repeated with more acrimony than ever. Clausen, for one, had lost all patience, he said. Koren said that the only condition upon which conferences could be continued would be that Eielsen become *Lutheran;* he further stated that the Synod's repeated advances undoubtedly gave the other side the impression that the Synod pastors acknowledged that Eielsen was right and that they wanted in some way indirectly to come to a settlement without admitting themselves to be in the wrong. A. C. Preus would agree to a motion to break off relations; one had, however, to be careful not to offend against the tenets of Christian

[47] The reference is undoubtedly to Paul Anderson and others. It is strange that Rasmussen, so lately dismissed from the "Missouri" Seminary, should thus be roundly denounced as a Calvinist.

[48] Elias Stangeland was editor and printer, and with Charles M. Reese, ex-editor of *Emigranten,* Hans Borchsenius, and J. D. Reymert, also ex-editor of *Emigranten,* composed the staff of *Den Norske Amerikaner.* All cordially hated the Synod pastors for one reason or another.

[49] E.g. A. C. Preus, "Lidt Meer om den lille 'd,'" in *Emigranten,* February 11, 1856.

love and forbearance. A motion was finally passed that relations should be broken, with the statement: "We do not hereby, of course, say that we should not in a loving manner associate in secular affairs with the *members* of that church." [50] Thus war to the hilt was officially declared by the Synod pastors, who, for the time being, were very much incensed at the Eielsen-Rasmussen group. On the other side, Rasmussen and Eielsen did not stop to declare war officially, but entered heart and soul into the conflict. Throughout the controversy the Synod pastors singled out Rasmussen as the target for their attack, both because he was a worthy foeman, and because they wished to draw him out and drive a wedge between him and Eielsen. On the Synod pastors' part, the controversy thus changed from a war of personalities to a war of conquest, though they were not destined to win Rasmussen immediately.

As at the Spring Prairie meeting, so now in the course of the controversy, Rasmussen was driven out on theological grounds whither Eielsen was not equipped to follow. This unequal share in the fight and, consequently, in its honors, brought on strained relations in Eielsen's camp. In the course of this fight with the Synod pastors, Rasmussen started his *Kirkelig Tidende* (Churchly Times) in 1856, which, as before mentioned,[51] had such power of repercussion that Eielsen would have nothing more to do with Rasmussen. Out on the field of theology, Rasmussen was again forced to admit the things he had admitted at Spring Prairie, but this time, when he came back to his own camp, he refused to repudiate the concessions he had made to the pastors, but insisted on abiding by his agreements. Goaded on by his opponents in the Synod camp, Rasmussen repeated the charge he made at Lisbon in 1854, that paragraph two of the *Old Constitution* was Donatistic and that the changes voted by that meeting should be enforced. As at Spring Prairie, Rasmussen conceded that lay activity should be restricted, but when he turned to Eielsen to have this done, he found that Eielsen was in favor of an absolutely free and untrammeled lay activity. Once a wedge had been driven between the two, there was sufficient cause for reproach on both sides, as Rasmussen, both by his schooling at Fort Wayne and his contact with the Synod pastors, had acquired ideas in regard to doctrine, and especially in regard to church government, that were absolutely foreign, if not downright odious, to Eielsen. Consequently, in the meeting at Primrose, Wisconsin, June, 1856, after a sharp but decisive battle between the "new" and the "old," Rasmussen and fully half of Eielsen's total membership left the meeting in anger.[52] Eielsen now recoiled and became more radically committed than ever to his *Old Constitution* and all its errors. Besides this, Eielsen felt that Rasmussen's approaches to-

[50] *Report,* 1855, 14.
[51] Above, 142.
[52] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed,* 86-89.

ward churchliness would be the bane of his cherished laymen's activity.[53]

This was the second time that Eielsen had met opposition from the "educated" clergy in his own camp, and, though he had supported Rasmussen's school at Lisbon, he was not at all inclined to perpetuate institutions of learning which invariably seemed to bring him disaster. Only a repudiation of Eielsen could make a parley between the educated Synod men and the group that remained with Eielsen at Primrose worth while, as matters now stood. With Eielsen were now four ordained men, of whom A. E. Boyum and Östen Hanson[54] were to desert him in 1876, when Eielsen's *Old Constitution* again had become a reef on which his synod ran aground.

Rasmussen's faction now consisted of his assistant, Rev. H. L. Thalberg (ordained 1855), and the powerful Lisbon congregation and its tributaries in Wisconsin and Illinois, and—later—in Iowa and Minnesota. This group was subsequently joined by Rev. Nils Amlund (ordained 1860) and Rev. John N. Fjeld (ordained 1861).

Having cast Eielsen's bands from them, Rasmussen's faction was now free to follow its own predilections. Just where these would lead is not so easy to see at this time, though Rasmussen was fully capable of organizing a church of his own if necessity arose. Looking to his past connections with "Missouri" and the undoubted admiration that this young Haugean had for the deep piety and the sterling orthodoxy of such "Missouri's" leaders as Prof. Walther, President Wyneken, and Dr. Sihler, he might have been expected to cast his eyes in that direction. Indeed, Andrewsen's *Kirketidende* stamped him as a "Missourian," a statement which, though denied by *Kirkelig Maanedstidende,*[55] was not without its basis in fact as far as Rasmussen's training and interests were concerned. Rasmussen's development had undoubtedly been in the direction of churchliness rather than its opposites, and he had, moreover, begun to acquire a more thorough appreciation of pure doctrine as the fountainhead of correct Christian action. Among the Norwegians, the Synod represented more especially the orthodox element he was looking for, though his association with Eielsen might have made it difficult for him to detect the piety which he also looked for in his associates. Nor had the wounds he had sustained in the fights with the Synod men healed sufficiently for him to give them the hand of fellowship. A third possibility was the Northern Illinois Synod, where there was a very voluble piety, but where other qualities that Rasmussen valued highly were sadly lacking.

As for the Synod men's attitude toward him, their Christian charity was not free from the dross of human passion, although the

[53] By "laymen's activity" he meant that laymen should perform practically all the ministerial functions except the administration of the Lord's Supper.

[54] O. M. Norlie, *Norsk Lutherske Prester i Amerika,* 24.

[55] *Norsk Lutherske Kirkentidende,* January 28, 1858, and *Kirkelig Maanedstidende,* March, 1858.

concessions Rasmussen had made and his consistent action in following these up by breaking with Eielsen rather than again repudiating them, naturally made the pastors respect Rasmussen very highly. But they wished to be sure of their man before they let him come into camp. Thus Rev. H. A. Preus, in his introductory remarks to *Kirkelig Maanedstidende* in 1856, speaks of the controversy with Eielsen's church as having been carried on as a consequence of Rasmussen's *Report,* and that Rasmussen had been, and still was, writing in his paper against the Synod pastors. In the course of the conflict, he says, the Synod had grown in the firmness and stability, the unity and cohesion, the devotion and sacrifice, which are so essential to the church's growth and expansion. "On the other hand, our defense of the truth," he claims, "has contributed to the relaxation and split, which lately has appeared in the Ellingian body, and by which the truth—and our synod which stands by this—has won not a slight victory." While Eielsen's Synod was weakened, the Norwegian Synod was strong and eager for further exploits.

Though A. C. Preus might have been willing to throw away the advantages thus gained by a generous impulse to make peace without carrying the fight to a decisive close, H. A. Preus was too astute and far-sighted a churchman for a hazard of this kind. Consequently the struggle had to go on without any essentially new element being added, save possibly that Rasmussen was made more and more to realize that Haugean piety *can* be combined with orthodoxy among the Norwegians as well as among the Germans, where piety and orthodoxy were happily blended in Prof. Walther and others. As a possible additional link between the two factions, the Norwegian Synod was making overtures in 1856-57-58 to send its young men to the Concordia Theological Seminary of the "Missouri" Synod at St. Louis. As time went on the relations between Rasmussen and the Synod pastors improved, as is shown by the somewhat friendly interchange of opinions from April, 1857, and on, regarding respect for each other's parochial rights.[56]

Meanwhile, the relations between Rasmussen and Eielsen improved only very slightly, inasmuch as the offending paragraphs in Eielsen's *Old Constitution* were not changed. In his *Kirkelig Tidende* for May, 1857, Rasmussen attacked paragraph two of the *Constitution* very severely, saying that "the Ellingians here make no distinction between the visible and invisible Church, but place for admission to Elling's church a condition which alone applies to membership in the invisible Church, the Communion of Saints. They err in that they believe that their church is composed only of converted and holy persons, without any admixture of hypocrites." [57] Though Rasmussen very magnanimously refrained from using his paper for bitter personal attacks on his former associate, he did not

[56] *K. Maanedstidende,* April, 1857.
[57] Quoted by *K. Maanedstidende,* 1858, 110.

altogether refrain from dealing in kind with Eielsen by word of mouth. Thus, at the meeting at Luther Valley in 1858, he said that he had left Eielsen both on account of Eielsen's false doctrine and his personal conduct.[58]

If possible, the Synod and Eielsen's group were farther removed from each other than ever. H. A. Preus now took hold of Eielsen's *Constitution* and found many errors in it.[59] He agreed with Rasmussen's criticism of paragraph two and added that the Ellingians must claim for themselves the ability to discern in the hearts of men whether or not they are converted or on the way of conversion. Paragraph one says that "the Church shall forever be . . . built on God's Word in the Holy Scriptures in conjunction with the *Apostolic* and *Augsburg Articles of Faith.*" [60] This means one of two things according to Preus; either the Church is built on the Word of God and the *Apostolic* and *Augsburg Articles of Faith,* or it is built on the Word of God in the Scriptures and in the *Apostolic* and *Augsburg Articles of Faith.* Both are equally erroneous. Grundtvigians place the *Apostolic Articles of Faith* on the same plane with God's Word, but the Ellingians go one better and include also the *Augsburg Confession* in this equality. No wonder they are so strict about the text of the *Apostolic Creed,* he says. Paragraph six condemns a long clerical gown, the Article VII of the *Augsburg Confession* notwithstanding. Paragraph five, he says, speaks of Absolution as being a consolation; the Lutheran Church, on the other hand, speaks of it as an impartation of the forgiveness of sins. They condemn us, he says, because we say the Church is *almindelig* (universal) and because our pastors are not spiritual. Because, he continues, they consider themselves "the little flock" and our congregations "the great mass," they have carried on as active proselytism as the Methodists and others, in the hope, as they say, of winning our people over to a true conversion and life in God. The Ellingians distinguish in Article XIV of the *Augsburg Confession* between preaching and the administration of the Sacraments. Eielsen preaches in virtue of his "call from God" without attempting to prove the legitimacy of his call, examination, and ordination. They also err in the matter of prayer meetings, he says, up to half a score praying in one evening, and among these are open and confirmed sinners. Olaus Nielsen had made a specious interpretation of Paul's words in that the women ask their husbands *at home* if they can *speak publicly* when they come into the assembly! Their doctrine that the Means of Grace lose power because they are administered by ungodly pastors is sufficiently condemned by the Church. He closes with a prayer that this frank exposition of his errors would bring Eielsen and his fellow-Christians back to the "old paths."

As could be expected, H. A. Preus did not succeed in "convert-

[58] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1858, 186.
[59] *Ibid.,* 1858, 110 ff.
[60] See above, 107.

ing" Eielsen by this long list of errors of which he was supposedly guilty. This list is important, not because it made much of an impression on Eielsen, but because it represents an attempt to formulate the outstanding differences between Eielsen and the Synod pastors. What Eielsen answered we shall never know; of this we can be certain, however, that he did answer, and if his answer had been recorded, it would probably have contained a still longer list of errors, to all of which, he would say, H. A. Preus must plead guilty.

Now, some might feel that these personal controversies were altogether unworthy, if not downright unchristian. Not at all. As indicated above,[61] the laymen were genuinely concerned about the doctrine and practice of the Church. Now Rev. H. A. Preus analyzes Rev. Eielsen's *Old Constitution* and finds it—and Eielsen—wanting on several scores. Eielsen, in turn, feels in duty bound to instruct the Synod pastors in the right and God-pleasing ways of life and doctrine. That the differences between them were not invented is shown by the fact that it took fifty years to settle some of them.

Nor must we imagine that these men entered into controversies because they had nothing else to do. On the contrary, some of the more unworthy outbreaks are directly attributable to overwrought nerves, as all the contestants, without a single exception, were men of fine Christian character and unimpeachable integrity. But a pastor, whose parish covers a state or more, might at times be off his guard and give vent to his spleen. Throughout it all, these men were even more active physically in their almost exhaustless efforts to build up God's kingdom on the midwestern prairies, than they were mentally and spiritually in their efforts to build up an irreproachable system of doctrine and practice in this young Norwegian American Lutheran Church.

[61] See above, 146.

CHAPTER VIII

DIVERGENT SYNODICAL ACTIVITIES

II. "Laymen's Activity"

While these feuds were going on, a constructive labor of love was prosecuted with even more vigor. The pastors were traveling far and wide to bring the Word of Life to the Norwegians, who were beginning to come in increasing numbers to settle in the various middle-western states.

The Synod pastors made arrangements with the Department of Church and Education in Norway in 1853 for the control of the clerical supply upon the following basis:

> 1. That no permit for ordination be given any Norwegian candidate in theology, called by a congregation in America, unless the call issued to him comes from the church council as the congregation's agent, or the church council has been heard in the matter. 2. That the honorable department, in case it should accede to the church council's request, should at its leisure make public its resolution regarding this matter.[1]

The church council in 1859 made a similar request of the German-speaking bodies,[2] in which they were less successful. With the control of the ministerial supply from Norway went a great missionary advantage.

In contrast to the hot exchanges with Eielsen were the brightening relations between the Synod, on the one side, and Rasmussen and Thalberg, on the other. A conference was held June 22, 1858, between Thalberg and Ottesen in Milwaukee, at which the "Missouri" pastors, Fürbringer, Steinbach, and Lochner acted as intermediaries.[3] Here Ottesen explained to Thalberg's satisfaction that the Grundtvigianism in the Synod constitution of 1851 had been removed as early as 1852, and that the Synod pastors had no Romanizing intention in using the definite article in the text of the Third Article of the *Apostolic Creed*. To avoid offense, they agreed to use the indefinite article hereafter. Rev. A. C. Preus, though not a Grundtvigian, had used misleading terms in his articles on the Church in 1851,[4] but this doctrine was repudiated and the correct doctrine of

[1] The Synod's *Korrespondence Protokol*, 1853.
[2] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1859, 80.
[3] Report of it in *K. Maanedstidende*, 1858, 177 ff.
[4] See above, 146 ff.

the Church was set forth by the pastors. Thalberg, on his side, was guilty of meddling at Port Washington and Muskego, where Rev. H. A. Stub was the rightfully called pastor. Even if Stub was at fault in his dealings with the Muskego congregation, Thalberg should have heard the other side [5] before receiving the malcontents into his congregation. To make amends, these members should either be sent back, or, in case they refused to go back, be denied membership by Thalberg. This was the judgment of the intermediaries.

A similar conference of much more far-reaching consequences was held at Luther Valley, Wisconsin, October 4, 1858.[6] Profs. Walther and Craemer of the "Missouri" Synod acted as intermediaries, and to accommodate them the German language was used. Present from the Synod side were pastors A. C. Preus, H. A. Preus, N. Brandt, G. F. Dietrichson, H. A. Stub, V. Koren, J. S. Munch, P. M. Brodahl, Laur. Larsen, J. A. Ottesen, and O. F. Duus. On the other side were Revs. P. A. Rasmussen and H. L. Thalberg. This meeting must have been carefully prepared, as it consisted of two confessions and very able discussions.

Rev. A. C. Preus, president of the Norwegian Synod, opened the conference confessing that his articles in *Maanedstidende* about the Church were hazy and erroneous. Of this he heartily repented. He was also willing to admit other possible errors. He admitted, when Rasmussen raised the question, that he had erred in distinguishing between *Church* and *the Communion of Saints,* and that he had had a tendency toward high-churchism in his effort to counteract the enthusiasts as he called the extreme low-church element; but, he added, he had repudiated these errors at the last yearly meeting of the Synod. Since Rasmussen, it was charged, had given the "Missourians" the impression [7] that there were Romanizing tendencies in the Norwegian Synod, Prof. Walther was asked to express himself on this point. The latter admitted that he had received this impression from Rasmussen's reports, but that he could not remember that Rasmussen had at any time specifically made this charge. H. A. Preus asked if they again had to go over what was settled at Spring Prairie in regard to the Church. Koren wanted to know if the whole Synod was to be held accountable for what A. C. Preus wrote before the Synod was organized and before the majority of its present pastors had even come to America. Rasmussen declared that possibly the whole Synod was not at fault, and that, therefore, Preus's retraction was all that could be required.

Rasmussen stamped as false A. C. Preus's statement that one should *believe in* the Church. Although no false doctrine was harbored back of this statement in his case, Preus admitted that the word was subject to misunderstanding, hence should not be used.

[5] Audiatur et altera pars. See above, 144, for Stub's troubles at Muskego and Port Washington.

[6] Report of this in *K. Maanedstidende,* 1858, 180-192.

[7] By his reports in *Der Lutheraner,* and otherwise. See above, 151.

He had further declared that the Protestants had not developed the doctrine of the Church. This he retracted. As for the parts entering into a proper definition of the Church, Rev. Preus had predicated too many of these, and now repudiated this error and reasserted his adherence to Article VII of the *Augsburg Confession.* Rev. P. A. Rasmussen now declared himself reassured as to the orthodoxy of Rev. A. C. Preus and the Norwegian Synod in regard to this part of the doctrine of the Church. Rev. Rasmussen then took up some statements in the synodical *Report* of 1855, but Rev. J. A. Ottesen explained that these were the opinions of Rev. C. L. Clausen, a "confirmed" [8] Grundtvigian. Olaus Nielsen's *Letters to the Trondhjemmers* were taken up, since the Preuses had declared them erroneous at Spring Prairie, but had later recalled their statements. The Preuses admitted that they had not been sufficiently circumspect in this matter. In regard to those who held that there was a conversion after death, Rev. A. C. Preus had said that in America he would have no fellowship with such as taught this, but in case he returned to Norway, he would submit to such a fellowship. Preus explained that he would not refuse to enter the service of the State Church simply because there were those in it that held these erroneous views. But he would not refrain from witnessing against this error. Rasmussen was satisfied. The definite *den,* or indefinite *en,* article came up for discussion again. Ottesen said that there were fully four accepted versions in use; that a royal commission had revised the religious school texts, adopting the word *almindelig* which for ten years gave no offense. But when a later commission made some further alterations in order to introduce changes in doctrine toward Grundtvigianism, a storm of opposition was aroused which did not confine itself to that particular commission's work, but also took in the revisions of 1835. Revs. J. W. C. Dietrichson and C. L. Clausen, the first pastors in America, being Grundtvigians, had introduced the new versions, but had retained *Christian* in the text. When the later pastors came, for the sake of peace and to avoid confusion, they used these texts without thereby subscribing to the Grundtvigian doctrine. For proof of this he pointed to the revision of the Synod constitution of 1851.

Because the opposition, Rev. V. Koren said, had taken such extreme positions as to state that the Synod formula would condemn one to hell-fire, the Synod had not as readily yielded as it otherwise would. Rasmussen observed that the struggle was not so much concerning the texts used in school as regarding the formula used in baptism. The indefinite *en,* he said, is better attested than the definite *den,* and has been used in the Norwegian Church since 1783;

[8] A footnote explains that Clausen accepted only a part of Grundtvig's doctrine. He did believe that the *Apostolic Creed* was inspired as well as the Scriptures. But he did not place the *Creed* besides the Scriptures as *norma normans.* (*K. Maanedstidende,* 1858, 182.)

by setting aside the Lutheran version and accepting another, the Lutheran version is declared to be false, and Wexels' to be correct; the new version was used as a means of smuggling in the new doctrine that the Church consisted of all the baptized who confessed the Christian faith; and, if nothing else, these changes open the articles to revisions with absolutely no guarantee that the reviser will stop there. In this connection, Brandt and Koren explained that the children who had been denied baptism were denied because their parents had declared that *almindelig* was false and unbiblical.[9] Prof. Walther observed that *almindelig* was an excellent translation for *catholica,* and could in no way be branded as false. Rasmussen and Thalberg said they had no objection to the word so long as it was given a proper meaning.

It was now Rasmussen's turn to confess. He admitted that he had sinned against the tenets of brotherly love when, in his report of the meeting at Spring Prairie, he had accused Rev. A. C. Preus of having knowingly and deliberately told an open lie. This statement Rasmussen now retracted. Ottesen read Rasmussen's synodical *Report,* whereupon Rasmussen also made a formal retraction of these statements against the Synod pastors. He had made his sarcastic charges that the Preuses attempted to pin him down with references to the Latin and Greek texts, not to hurt their character but "in the heat of the controversy." Rasmussen publicly asked A. C. Preus to forgive him for all the uncharitable remarks that he had made about him. He confessed he had unduly stressed the implications that might be found in the word *almindelig,* and that it need not be Grundtvigian. Ottesen, the official counsel for the Synod pastors, declared that he could distinguish two distinct periods in the pastorate of Rasmussen, namely, before and during his association with Eielsen. On inquiry whether or not he regarded Eielsen's ordination as valid, Rasmussen said that he had regarded it as such, as he had seen a document from Rev. Francis Alex. Hoffman to this effect. After he had heard what the Synod pastors had to say on this point, he was not at all certain as to its validity.[10] Rasmussen was reprehended by the counsel for not having protested against Eielsen's unchurchly practice of requesting laymen to pray. Rasmussen replied that he was accustomed to this practice from Norway, and could see nothing wrong in it so long as it was done in an orderly way. Moreover, he could not see that this was contrary to God's Word; in case he was convinced that such was the case, he would henceforth desist from the practice. The Synod men, and also Walther and Craemer, disagreed with Rasmussen on this point, which was consequently left unsettled.

[9] Stub, for instance, had refused to make changes in the baptismal formula at Port Washington at the request of parents who branded the Synod version as being false. Three took their children home unbaptized. (See *K. Maanedstidende,* 1860, 286.)

[10] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1858, 186.

Rasmussen went on to say that he had faithfully witnessed against the errors in Eielsen's *Old Constitution* and had attempted to amend it. In reply to a question from Rev. A. C. Preus, he said that he had left Eielsen both on account of his doctrine and his personal conduct. Rasmussen's congregational constitution contained the provision that the congregation's pastor must be "converted to the Bishop of souls." Rasmussen said that "ought" would have been better. After other points had been touched upon, Craemer asked if Rasmussen's and Thalberg's orthodoxy could not be acknowledged on all points save on the question of prayer meetings. All the Synod pastors assented. On their side, Rasmussen and Thalberg acknowledged that the Synod pastors were orthodox, only Rasmussen was not convinced that the Synod pastors had the correct doctrine of "lay activity";[11] for the Synod pastors said that a layman was denied by Article XIV of the *Augsburg Confession* the right to teach and admonish in a public meeting for edification.[12] This was too much for the pastors and the intermediaries, wherefore they "suspended" the acknowledgment of Rasmussen's and Thalberg's orthodoxy.[13]

Even if the parties thus failed to agree, much headway had been made. Rasmussen broke with the Synod pastors because of their extreme position, as he thought, *against* "laymen's activity"; on the other hand, he broke with Eielsen for holding what he regarded as radical views *in favor of* "lay activity." From this quivering point of impossible neutrality, both sides naturally wished to dislodge him in the hope that he would come their way. While the Synod and Rasmussen factions were thus brought close together, neither side was satisfied, as some trivial thing might happen to break open the old sores again.

During this conference it was found that the Norwegian leaders, who had little sympathy for "laymen's activity," and especially for prayer meetings, had much in common with the "Missourians," of whom Walther, at least, had been a pietist. The German leaders, however, had never really come into contact with a situation like that among the Norwegians, where piety, by the ground-swell of a popular awakening, had issued, not so much from the pastors, as from a very gifted layman. To Walther, "laymen's activity" was a theoretic problem that could easily be referred to Article XIV of the *Augsburg Confession* and thereby automatically solved. It was, however, not so easily resolved by Walther's great contemporaries in Norway, Prof. Gisle Johnson, Prof. Carl Paul Caspari, and

[11] "Lay activity" (Lägmandsvirksomhed) was a term that covered those functions that lie on the borderline between the well-defined provinces of the clergy and the laymen. This "lay activity" might include public prayer or even preaching by the unordained, who, consequently, were called "laymen."

[12] Article XIV reads: "Of Ecclesiastical Order, they teach, that no one should publicly teach in the church or administer the Sacraments, unless he be regularly called." (Jacob's ed., *Book of Concord.*)

[13] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1858, 192.

Bishop J. C. Heuch. On the other hand, their common view on "lay activity" and their frequent personal contacts made the Synod pastors feel a strong affinity for the "Missourians." Not only did they and the "Missourians" agree on many points of formal doctrine, but they also found that they agreed to a considerable degree in practice. At this time, also, negotiations were well under way to have the Norwegian students go to St. Louis, Missouri, for their education.

No wonder, then, that Rev. H. A. Preus exults in the new-found love to the "Missourians" in the introduction to *Kirkelig Maanedstidende* for 1859:

> Indeed, how plainly has not the Lord shown us of how much importance our salvation is to Him, by this that He also in this country, which is harassed by hundreds of sects, has permitted us to find fellow-believers and allies in the fight for the one Truth in the German-speaking, but orthodox, "Missouri" Synod. These men are rejected as intolerant and exclusive, but truth must be exclusive over against falsehood and error, light over against darkness; for what communion hath light with darkness, Christ with Belial? We must rejoice when we are condemned as being hard-hearted, intolerant, and unchristian, because we, like the "Missourians," would not let anyone take from us the most precious treasure that God in His grace has given us here on earth—His Word of Truth—and have no desire toward those who would satisfy us with stones instead of bread. Certain it is, that it also is a divine favor for which we cannot sufficiently thank God, that He has permitted us to come into such close relationship with such a body, to whom the Word of God surpasses everything else, and who would let go everything else in order to preserve the Word pure and undefiled. . . .
>
> It should be unnecessary to show more in detail what God by this association has done for our church body's internal growth, confirmation in the Truth, and its plain-spoken witness against all error. Merely to mention that which can be felt and touched, God has lately permitted us by our German brethren's sacrificing help and coöperation to come into a more confidential and brotherly relation to the two Norwegian pastors, Rev. P. A. Rasmussen and Rev. H. L. Thalberg; a thing which in no case can be without blessed results for the Norwegian Lutheran Church in this country, even if the future—which God forbid—should show that a full union is not brought about. As far as the Synod's relation to the Ellingians is concerned, no essential change has taken place in the past year, except in so far that our Synod has arrived at a clearer acknowledgment of the errors and the divergent spiritual tendencies which are becoming more and more apparent in the Ellingian sect, just as, on the other side, a greater obduracy naturally must take place where the truth is thus opposed and rejected. God grant that over against them and other sects we may speak the truth in love![14]

This was not only a characterization of the year 1858 but it was the keynote for years to come.

[14] *Ibid.*, 1859, 2.

Especially is this true of 1859 and 1860. In 1859 a controversy was waged about "laymen's activity," but it was so managed that a direct clash with Rasmussen was avoided. *Kirkelig Maanedstidende* for 1859 contains a number of articles by Rev. J. A. Ottesen, who attacked prayer meetings and "laymen's activity" in general, taking care, of course, to designate what he regarded as the legitimate sphere for "lay activity." [15] For this controversy he found valuable material in the "Missouri" theological paper, *Lehre und Wehre,* and in Walther's book, *Kirche und Amt,*[16] which came to be highly prized in the Norwegian Synod. In reply to Paul Anderson and O. J. Hatlestad, who literally had filled Ole Andrewsen's *Norsk Luthersk Kirketidende* (Norwegian Lutheran Church Times) [17] with articles about lay activity to the derogation of the State-Church activity, Ottesen fired a broadside of nine salvos in his nine theses on "That Laymen's Prayer and Speech in Public Meetings of Edification are Contrary to God's Word." He based the whole discussion on Article XIV of the *Augsburg Confession,* stressing especially the need of an external as well as an internal call to "publicly teach." [18] Ottesen also made a searching inquiry into the doctrine and practices of the General Synod, of which the Northern Illinois Synod was a part, in a series of articles which he called "Blik i Generalsynoden" (Glimpse into the General Synod). By writing a parallel set of articles about the "Missouri" Synod, he placed these two in juxtaposition. At the close of the General Synod articles, Ottesen paid his respects to Paul Anderson, who had said that, for sake of conscience, he could not join the Norwegian Synod because there *had been* at least one, or possibly two, Grundtvigians in that body; but he could belong to the General Synod, said Ottesen, where "practically any sort of error 'so long as it is not entirely too crass' can be publicly preached with a claim to constitutional protection." [19] Rev. J. A. Ottesen makes the most of Rev. Paul Anderson's English *Prologue,*[20] in which he admits that the Synod pastors were sincere in their adherence to the Confessions. Rev. A. C. Preus, in his customary somewhat objective style, wrote an article in which he tried to show that lay preaching was not only contrary to Article XIV of the *Augsburg Confession,* but contrary to Scriptures as well.[21]

While carrying on this active offensive warfare, practically all of the Synod pastors were forced to rush to the defense of their Church. Thus Ottesen in the July and August issues of *Kirkelig Maanedsti-*

[15] See especially his reply to all his critics (among them Rasmussen) in *K. Maanedstidende,* 1859, 145 ff.
[16] For Ottesen's sources see *K. Maanedstidende,* 1859, 187.
[17] See above, 141 ff.
[18] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1859, 67.
[19] *Ibid.,* 1859, 118.
[20] "To the English Reader" in *Norsk Luthersk Kirketidende,* December 24, 1857.
[21] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1895, 164 ff.

dende, 1859, had to answer Rev. P. Anderson, who, in 1859, as Prof. Weenaas later, strangely enough repeated the old charges that the Norwegian Synod was Grundtvigian, because its constitution (of 1851) was Grundtvigian.[22] Similarly, in the August issue of *Kirkelig Maanedstidende,* Rev. A. C. Preus found it necessary to reply to Rev. O. J. Hatlestad, who had dug up the old bones of the long buried doctrine of conversion after death, and charged the Synod with it. Rev. H. A. Stub had to go through for the hundredth time the story of the Muskego troubles, this time succeeding in satisfying the disgruntled elements somewhat, possibly because Rasmussen and Thalberg did not actively back up the malcontents.[23] Rev. H. A. Preus had to set right Rasmus Sörenson of Scandinavia, Waupaca County, Wisconsin, on the relation between life and doctrine, stressing the need of correct doctrine. The reason that Preus pounced upon such an obscure person, as he described him, was that the whole Ellingian sect was back of Sörenson's pamphlet, *Følgende vigtige Spörgsmaal* (The Following Important Questions).[24] A young missionary pastor in Iowa and Minnesota, Rev. Laur. Larsen, also brought reports of skirmishes with the "licensed" pastors of the Northern Illinois Synod.[25]

In this missionary report, Larsen discussed especially the prospects for a "university" among the Scandinavians. Contrary to his preconceived ideas from Norway, whence he emigrated in 1857, he now finds that it would be better to cut across the lines of national kinship and work with the Germans rather than with the more closely related racial groups of the Northern Illinois Synod. These latter groups, in turn, made much of the fact that the "Missourians" were *German,* thereby expecting to capitalize the odium that the Germans brought upon themselves in the Scandinavian countries by coveting Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark. Further, the Lutheranism of Germany had long been under suspicion as being entirely too liberal, if not utterly unorthodox.[26]

The conferences at Luther Valley between Rasmussen-Thalberg and the Synod, though in nowise conclusive, were regarded by both sides as paving the way for peace, and hence brought on a virtual cessation of hostilities in that quarter. With nominal peace established on that front, the Norwegian Synod was free to give its undivided attention to Eielsen and the Northern Illinois Synod, with the result that Paul Anderson, Hatlestad, and others were given the battle they had been looking for at least since 1851. The Norwegians of the Northern Illinois Synod had been feeling entirely secure in the protection of the powerful General Synod, which in 1859-60 comprised two-thirds of all the Lutherans in America. But as a result of its flagrant disregard of Lutheran doctrine and practice, the General Synod became involved in a disastrous struggle with

[22] *Ibid.,* 1859, 118.
[23] *Ibid.,* 1859, 180.
[24] *Ibid.,* 1859, 42.
[25] *Ibid.,* 1858, 127, and 1859, 50.
[26] *Ibid.,* 1859, 47.

Dr. Walther and the "Missourians" which made its proud walls crumble, so that, from its high estate of commanding influence, by 1868 it was reduced to barely one-fourth of the total Lutheran membership in America.[27] Disrupted and discredited, the General Synod had to yield its position of preëminence among Lutherans to the strictly orthodox "Missouri" Synod. With the General Synod leaders more than occupied, the Northern Illinois pastors—Anderson, Andrewsen, Hatlestad—were left to defend the Norwegian sector alone. By throwing bombshell after bombshell into their midst, and by dividing the opposition by singling out the Swedes for special commendation,[28] the Norwegian Synod leaders forced both the Norwegians and Swedes to take a more well-defined Lutheran stand over against the General Synod's doctrinal laxity. To avoid being isolated, Paul Anderson had to adapt himself to the changing spirit and become a champion of the conservative faith. Up to 1860 we find Paul Anderson defending the Northern Illinois Synod's connection with the General Synod, and, with the Swedes, hotly resenting the Norwegian Synod's challenge to "come out from among them."

Despite the insulted air of the Scandinavian pastors of the Northern Illinois Synod at the Synod men's rebuke that their adherence to the General Synod was sinful, they nevertheless came "out from among them" as a result of the very conditions that the Synod men described. The early Swedish Augustana historian, E. Norelius, writes in 1870:

> Very soon the Scandinavians began to feel that their position within the [No. Ill.] Synod became increasingly unpleasant on account of the loose confessionalism which the American leaders showed at every meeting. So long as they [the Scandinavians] were allowed to have their own convictions in peace, and so long as they had any hope of working up more faithfulness to the Confessions among the American and German leaders, they did not think of a separation. They even succeeded in bringing matters so far that the loose constitutional decision in regard to doctrine was changed to an unambiguous acceptance of the *Augsburg Confession* as a correct and true exposition of the Christian fundamentals. But in later years many lax Lutherans came in who did not wish to hear any talk of Confessional Writings, and who worked with all their might to tear down all the barriers to full doctrinal freedom. When the Scandinavians from bitter experience finally discovered that no hopes remained for pure Lutheran doctrine and practice within this synod, they decided to withdraw from it and form a new synod among themselves. This withdrawal took place in the spring of 1860 at a general meeting of the Scandinavian members of the Northern Illinois Synod.[29]

[27] See above, 102.

[28] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1859, 125, where H. A. Preus commends the Swedish organ *Hemlandet* for its positive attitude and otherwise commends the Swedes.

[29] E. Norelius, *Ev. Lutherska Augustana-Synoden i Nord Amerika och dess Mission,* 22.

The crisis was brought on by an attempt to muzzle Rev. L. P. Esbjörn, who in 1858 was elected Scandinavian professor in theology at the Illinois State University, which was a Lutheran institution at the time. Esbjörn was originally quite liberal in his views,[30] but his contact with the ultra-liberal element in the Northern Illinois Synod forced him to reëxamine his position, with the result that he swung more and more toward a conservative position. When his position became manifestly at variance with the liberalism of his colleagues at Illinois State University, the authorities of that institution, in an effort to prevent him from widening the breach which was beginning to appear, resorted to the strategy of loading him down with so many secular subjects that he should find no time for theology. Protests were sent in by Esbjörn and the Scandinavian leaders, but the situation became constantly more critical, as the General Synod, to which Northern Illinois belonged, was at this time engaged in a furious struggle with "Missouri" and could tolerate no insubordination in her own ranks. Finally the authorities forbade Esbjörn and the Scandinavians to have separate Communion, whereupon Esbjörn resigned and removed to Chicago, whither all but two of the Scandinavian students followed him. In a meeting at Chicago, April 23-28, 1860, the Scandinavians listened patiently for a whole day to accusations against Esbjörn and then voted unanimously to sustain him, thereby severing their relations with the Northern Illinois Synod.[31] Retiring to Clinton, Rock County, Wisconsin, the Scandinavians organized the *Scandinavian Augustana Synod,* with a membership of eleven Swedish and eight Norwegian pastors. With the aid of the Swedish-Norwegian king, Carl XV, and friends in the two countries, the school was continued at Chicago under its new name, *Augustana Seminary.* Confessional Lutheranism won a great victory when the Scandinavians "came out from among them."

In a conference, on July 7, 1859, the Scandinavian element of the Northern Illinois Synod retracted their charges of Grundtvigianism against the Synod. "Laymen's activity," the other outstanding issue, was left for a future conference. But this conference could not be arranged, ostensibly because Ottesen's serial, "Glimpse into the General Synod," had been continued in the August issue of *Kirkelig Maanedstidende,* although a truce was supposed to be in effect at this time. In spite of all that Rev. H. A. Preus could say in explanation, this "glimpse" had proved too sharp both for the Swedes and Norwegians. Other exchanges also took place; it is highly probable, however, that the newly formed Scandinavian Augustana Synod felt unequal to the strain of having conferences with the Synod pastors at this time.

[30] J. A. Bergh in *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika,* 62, says: "Esbjörn was both a pious and a learned man, but hardly from the first a completely orthodox Lutheran."

[31] For these acts see O. J. Hatlestad, *Historiske Meddelelser,* 62.

Although the Augustanans were in no position to take part *officially* in a free conference, they did sit in *unofficially* at the historic conference in "Our Savior's Church" in Chicago, August 28-31, 1860, between the Synod pastors and the Rasmussen-Thalberg faction, which now included also Rev. J. Fjeld and Rev. Nils Amlund.[32] Since both Rev. P. A. Rasmussen and Rev. H. L. Thalberg had received ordination from "Missouri," the Rev. Prof. Craemer of that synod was welcomed as much by these as by the Norwegian Synod pastors. Since this meeting dealt with questions which are of paramount importance in the history of the Norwegian American Lutheran Church, we shall give a full report of the proceedings.

Rasmussen began by saying that he had not changed his mind on the outstanding question, namely, "lay activity." Laymen should have the right to teach and pray publicly, (1) because they belonged to the universal priesthood of believers; (2) because Christian brotherly love demanded it; and (3), because it was the practice of the early Christian Church.

All agreed concerning the priesthood of believers; but to what extent could this be applied in this case? In both the Old and the New Testament, the priesthood must offer itself completely to the Lord either immediately by a surrender of heart, soul, and mind, or mediately by turning to its neighbor to serve him. Not only does the believer serve by his temporal gifts, but more especially by his spiritual gifts. To do this fully, he cannot restrict himself to an occasional private communion in prayer, but the Christian has the right to meet with fellow-believers for prayer and mutual admonition.

In regard to the second point, Rasmussen said that the Christians were all children of the same Father; hence they must be bound by a love more sincere than even that of kinship. For mutual edification and warning Christians desire in fellowship to pray to God. These meetings must not conflict with the order God himself has prescribed: nor should they conflict with the rules laid down by the Lutheran Symbols. No one should pose as a teacher or a mouthpiece of others, but he should edify and be edified by the others. In substantiation of the third point he cited I Cor. xiv: "Ye may all prophesy," giving all the right to prophesy; but for the sake of order only two or three should exercise the right. Laymen like Stephen, Philip, and Apollos, preached.

The other side took up the discussion, conceding everything except the point on which the whole thing hinged: How and when can a layman teach and preach? So long as it was clearly understood that no one was to *teach*, but that everything was to be for mutual edification, no objections would be raised by Ottesen, Larsen, H. A. Preus, and Koren. Opportunity should always be given for questions and counter remarks, as, for instance, in this present assembly;

[32] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1859, 160. Seven Swedish and four Norwegian pastors of the Northern Illinois group were present.

when one preaches (teaches), on the other hand, such questions and counter remarks would be entirely out of place, since, as Clausen observed, the pastor speaks in behalf of everyone both to God and to his fellow-believers. When anyone stands forth and says, "Let us all pray," he prays for all; hence is the teacher of all. Who would have the temerity to stand forth and argue against a public prayer, regardless of its patent errors? As a protection against imposition, the congregations delegate this form of "teaching" to a rightly called and properly examined pastor.

Rasmussen objected to the extension of "teaching" so that it embraced prayer. Why this nervousness about error in praying? Is prayer a gift of God, or simply a fruit of study? If it is a gift of God, then anyone who possesses this gift certainly can pray in a God-pleasing and edifying manner. To this the other side replied that, although prayer was a gift of God, it was not an immediate but a mediate gift, obtained through the medium of a humble "studium," or zealous study of God's Word.

Arriving at the crux of the matter, the Synod pastors were asked to give their interpretation of Article XIV of the *Augsburg Confession,* which reads: "Of Ecclesiastical Order, they teach, that no one should publicly teach in the church or administer the Sacraments, unless he be regularly called." By this they understood that God has arranged it so that one or more who are delegated to this task should teach in the congregation in behalf of all. God himself gives teachers through the congregation's call, whose duty it therefore becomes to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments. "Publicly" is not restricted to church worship and public gatherings where anyone who wishes may come; but the "teaching" is done in behalf of the "public" (i. e. officially in behalf of the whole assembly, the congregation, and of God himself) when a pastor in private admonishes a single individual in virtue of his position as the minister of all. Anyone, then, who presumes to teach in behalf of all in a public assembly without being called thereto is a thief.[33] If, therefore, laymen wish to speak in public gatherings, they must do it for mutual edification, not as teachers. Ample opportunity must be given for dissent, seeing the layman has no call, but must speak as an equal to equals.

To this conception of the "public" ministry Rasmussen agreed. Besides this, however, there is a priesthood of believers in virtue of which all Christians have the right and duty to edify and admonish each other mutually. One or a few could do this according to their gifts. Under all circumstances order must be observed.

The pastors heartily concurred in Rasmussen's positive presentation, but they could not agree with what they termed his negative presentation. Rasmussen's argument really amounted to this, they said, that so long as a layman did not specifically say that he spoke in behalf of all, he did not transgress Article XIV. Rasmussen also

[33] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1860, 321.

had a different view of the word "mutual" from that of the pastors. Other points also needed to be cleared up.

Rev. B. J. Muus charged his fellow-pastors in the Norwegian Synod with too much formalism on this point. He confessed his inability to understand Article XIV of the *Augsburg Confession*. The article determines that there is a public ministry with privileges and duties not shared by laymen, but a sharp demarcation of the spheres he has never been able to find, as the Scriptures enjoin upon every Christian to serve himself and his neighbor according to the measure of grace and faithfulness God has given him. He believed that there is a universal priesthood whose functions it is to sacrifice and teach, and to these duties a person is set aside as soon as he becomes a Christian. This right cannot be transferred to others, in the sense that one thereby surrenders his own right to exercise it himself, in case the edification of others demands it. Where an ordained pastor is called, the public exercise of this right is assuredly delegated to him: where, however, the pastor either cannot or will not exercise this duty, there the Christian must himself exercise it. In case the pastor's right is unduly stressed so that the Word is not rightly preached, then one goes too far in one direction; if the laymen's rights are stressed so much that the work of the pastor suffers, then one goes too far in the opposite direction. He could absolutely not see any sharp and clear line of demarcation. That the public and extemporaneous prayer by a layman was sinful, he had never before in his life heard. On the contrary, he thought this was beneficial, as it aroused the feelings, and these were most readily reached through that channel.

Fjeld also thought they were far too formalistic on this point. He, too, had never heard that laymen could not pray in their own words in a public assembly. He believed that laymen could edify each other otherwise, but when they enter the church to preach they clearly overstep their bounds.

The Synod men observed that they had neither denied laymen the right to assemble for mutual edification, nor had they ever said it was a sin to pray; the admonition, however, must be mutual, and no one should speak in behalf of all as their teacher and mouthpiece. The laymen's admonition must take a different *form* from that of the pastor, who admonishes in behalf of all. Scriptures designate two forms of admonition: the mutual form common to all, and the public or official form reserved to the one set aside for this purpose. Since prayer can never be mutual, but always must be in behalf of all, it follows that prayer by a layman in behalf of all is contrary to Article XIV, and if contrary to Article XIV, also contrary to Scriptures, hence sin. But it has never been baldly stated that public prayer is sin, they said. Certainly a layman might pray for others when he utters the church prayers in unison with others. There would be no sense in assuming that he prays in his own name when he prays aloud in an assembly. Best of all, of course, is the

prayer in one's closet. The only motive for praying aloud is to pray in behalf of all, that one might thereby lead men to God; but this is to be the mouthpiece of all, hence contrary to Article XIV.

To focus the discussion, Rev. Prof. Craemer suggested a thesis and anti-thesis as follows:

> When it becomes actually apparent that the assembly in truth is public worship, then it is contrary to Article XIV for anyone without a regular call to publicly teach, admonish, pray, or administer the sacraments. [Unanimously accepted. The anti-thesis reads]: It is not meant that when all these parts are executed that then first a breach of Article XIV occurs, but whoever, without regular call, performs any of these functions in an assembly, which in truth is public worship, transgresses Article XIV.

Rasmussen and Fjeld objected that though laymen *could* pray in a sinful manner, it was not thereby conceded that any layman who prayed in a public assembly transgresses Article XIV. The Synod men retorted that Article XIV said more; not only *could* the laymen pray in a sinful way, but everyone who, without call, publicly taught (to which belongs public prayer, admonition, and correction in behalf of all, for all, and over all) transgressed the article. Since no agreement could be reached on this point, it was voted to defer discussion on it for the time being.

Like a ray of sunshine on the darkening horizon is Rev. A. C. Preus's historical sketch on the subject:

> The difficulties . . . connected with "lay activity" have their roots in conditions that are older than we are, since they spring from conditions in the Mother Church in Norway. When H. Hauge sixty years ago appeared, the Norwegian clergy was for the most part unbelieving and perverted, and the few who still could be accounted as believing pastors, were nearly all steeped in pietistic errors. Without trying to determine whether or not Hauge acted in accordance with churchly order, it seemed [to Preus] that if Hauge had remained mute, the stones would have spoken. Hauge and all believers were persecuted, even with violence, but the awakening among the laymen was not thereby stopped. The desire for better spiritual food than that offered in the marrowless rationalistic sermons was requited in the godly assemblies which the unbelieving clergy sought to prevent. From that time began the laymen's anxious fear that they would be deprived of their right to come together about God's Word. Hauge, in the meantime, sought strenuously to prevent every excess, but his rules were more and more left out of consideration, and about twenty to thirty years ago everyone who either really was, or merely imagined himself to be, awakened thought that he had to go out and preach. While the "laymen's activity" thus became more and more unrestrained, on the other hand, a very gratifying change for the better was taking place among the clergy, whereupon the question naturally arose as to the proper boundaries between the teaching office and the spiritual priesthood.

> As a result of the discussions that arose, there was effected as good an arrangement of "laymen's activity" as could be expected under the State Church system. The question has now pressed itself upon us, and that it has become a burning issue under our free institutions is not surprising. It has, however, been forced upon us by our opponents, since I do not know of as much as one instance where a pastor has had any unpleasantness with a single member of his congregation because the member was denied his full rights according to the priesthood of believers. When we have been forced to witness against the abuses to which our congregations are exposed from persons invariably outside of our Synod, this has been interpreted as though we would deny the laymen the rights which they in the darkest hour of need have won for themselves, only quite often to abuse it later.[34]

After having discussed the fundamental differences between a church service by a pastor and a mutual edification meeting by a layman, Preus went on to say the "mutual" was not conditioned merely by the opportunity to make reply, since the number of speakers is a pure accident. Even when one person speaks, so long as it is clearly understood that he can be answered, it is "mutual."

Rev. P. A. Rasmussen proposed the following five theses:

> 1. Believing Christians have the right to edify themselves mutually with prayer, the reading of God's Word, and admonition.
> 2. God's Word shows us that they have such a right through the spiritual priesthood and according to the law of brotherly love.
> 3. Believing Christians can exercise this right in many ways, partly by private intercourse on accidental occasions, by family worship, and by gatherings called together for mutual edification.
> 4. In such gatherings no one must on his own account pose as a teacher of the others, nor presume to exercise authority over the others, since all believing Christians, as spiritual priests, have equal rights.
> 5. If, for the sake of order, one or more lead such meetings, or if, on account of the gifts, only a few can pray or admonish and thereby exercise the right which belongs also to the other believers, they do not thereby have any authority over the others or any advantage over these, since all have the same right even if a few on account of the gifts exercise it, and a few for the sake of order lead such meetings.[35]

Paragraphs one, two, three, and four were unanimously accepted without discussion.

Against paragraph five a whole babel of voices were raised. The Rev. Prof. Craemer raised the objection that the line of demarcation between public teaching and mutual edification was entirely deleted by this paragraph. No one but the pastor should lead other meetings than family devotions. No distinction was here made between private meetings and public worship; anyone who undertakes

[34] *Ibid.*, 1860, 327.
[35] Text in *K. Maanedstidende*, 1860, 329.

to conduct even a private meeting exercises authority, and no one has a right to do this except he be called by the congregation.

Rasmussen repeated that no authority was given the leader. By "prayer," he added, was meant audible supplication to God in one's own words. Clausen said that it very often happened that prayer took the form, not of an address to God, but an admonition to one's neighbors. He further said that a sickly emotionalism often became manifest in these prayers, the most touching expressions being chosen in order to make the prayer "spiritual." Muus was not afraid of emotionalism. To the newly converted it was a means of arousing the lethargic flesh to a more vigilant struggle against sin. Even in the case of the more mature Christian, the feelings should not be neglected. Craemer dissented again. Larsen saw no great danger in the meetings so long as order was maintained and they were conducted on a "mutual" basis. Fjeld wished to maintain the integrity of the teaching estate; while it was understood that the pastors should preside at public worship, he could not see but that it would be a limitation of the laymen's rights to forbid them to pray in public assemblies.

Rev. A. C. Preus declared that he would vote for the paragraph. It was his sincere desire to go as far as he could without sacrificing the truth to heal the breach between the Synod and Rasmussen. It had been his constant sorrow that his church should be separated from the Haugean element, which was the salt in the State Church in Norway, and in America was chiefly represented by Rasmussen. He was, therefore, willing to make every possible concession, short of sacrificing the truth, to bring about a union.

Rev. J. A. Ottesen would not be blinded by a sentimental desire for union. To him *truth* was the chief thing, and this truth he had himself expressed in writing and speech.

Craemer now said that Rev. A. C. Preus was right when he had said that prayers could be uttered in public without being in behalf of all. In practical instances one could not make consistent applications where the offenders were sincere but uninstructed. One must quite often patiently submit to much that was unsound and frail in practice—only one must constantly bear in mind that it is frail and unsound.

Rev. P. A. Rasmussen said that he subscribed with all his heart both positively and negatively, to Article XIV of the *Augsburg Confession,* but that he was unwilling to subscribe to a doctrine built on an inference from this article. After Rev. C. L. Clausen had again spoken, the fifth paragraph was amended to read:

> 5. If for the sake of order one or more with the consent of the housefather or the assembly leads such meetings, and if only one or a few exercise such a right to pray and admonish, under the acknowledgment that other believers have the same right, the mutuality of the edification is not thereby destroyed, and these few do not thereby have authority or preëminence over the others.

In favor of this were A. C. Preus, Clausen, Muus, Fjeld, Rasmussen, Amlund, and Brodahl—in all seven. Against it were Ottesen, Larsen, Koren, Brandt, and Magelssen—in all five. The Synod pastors were thus divided four for and five against the resolution. H. A. Preus was absent.

At the time of adjournment, Rasmussen proposed that they meet again, and the Synod men readily accepted the invitation. The time was set for five o'clock next morning (August 31, 1860). Koren made a declaration that, though the Synod pastors had received the impression at the Luther Valley meeting that Rasmussen held erroneous views on Articles XIV of the *Augsburg Confession,* thereby making a schism imminent, they now note with pleasure that they were mistaken. This conference has brought out the fact that the divergence between the parties is not so great that it should be a barrier against active fellowship between them. This declaration was signed by all the Synod pastors present.

H. A. Preus had not been present the last two days of the meeting, hence added a note to the report in *Kirkelig Maanedstidende* saying that he could not subscribe to this declaration, nor to the five articles. Nor did he approve of all that was said by his fellow-pastors in the Norwegian Synod.[36]

The result of this gruelling conference indicated that the Norwegians were too evenly matched in strength for either side to carry the day decisively. When four Synod pastors joined Rasmussen, Thalberg, and Amlund, this combined vote only gave a margin of two over the Synod pastors who were opposed to the settlement. When the latter group was further reënforced by Rev. H. A. Preus's vote and influence, this faction was by far the stronger, though outvoted by one vote. It was evident that outside influence alone could break this virtual deadlock, and no greater force was known in the Lutheran Church than that which was thrown into the breach—Dr. C. F. W. Walther. His commanding scholarship and powerful personality swept the field clear of opposition from all quarters. After two years of deadlock, Prof. Walther succeeded in resolving the question to the satisfaction of both factions at the Synod meeting at Holden, Goodhue County, Minnesota, in 1862.[37] His masterly presentation is of sufficient historic interest to merit a full report.

Prof. Walther divided the subject into three parts: (1) the spiritual priesthood of believers; (2) the special office of the ministry in the congregaion established by God (special priesthood); and (3) how necessity knows no laws, hence supersedes the regular order in this matter (emergency priesthood).

In regard to the first Prof. Walther said that Paul, in Rom. iii. 2, declared of the Old Testament Church, or the believers at that time, that "unto them were committed the oracles of God." They were, therefore, the possessors and the stewards of God's Word, or the

[36] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1860, 338.
[37] *Report,* 1862, 12.

ministry. When factionalism arose in Corinth between the followers of Paul, Apollos, and Cephas, and each faction gloried in its leader, the apostle said to them: "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's" (I Cor. iii. 21-23). The apostle here says that these illustrious leaders and all that they had belonged to the Church. The office of the ministry is therefore not to be regarded as a private privilege, which alone belongs to the minister of the Gospel, but it is a common privilege belonging to all the true members of the Church. To them Peter therefore says: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people: that ye should show forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Pet. ii. 9). Believing Christians therefore should not think that it is enough if they themselves hear, receive, and believe God's Word; they should not think that they have no responsibility for the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments also to others, so that they could comfortably say: "This is what we have preachers for." No, the one to whom God has given faith, him He has also thereby made a spiritual priest or a preacher and on him placed the care for his neighbor's salvation.

When the Lord Himself said: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day. And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 46, 47), He does not lay this duty upon merely the apostles and the ministers, but upon the whole Church, that is, upon all believing Christians until the end of days. He who does not wish to be a preacher, he does not wish to be a Christian either; for a preacher and a Christian are identically the same.

The whole New Testament, therefore, is full of admonitions to the Christians to use God's Word not only for themselves, but also for their neighbors, for their brethren. Thus we read in Col. iii. 16: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord"; and in Eph. vi. 14, 15: "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace"; and in I Thess. v. 11-14: "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. . . . Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." On the other hand, we read in II Thess. iii. 14, 15: "And if any man obey not our words by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed"; and in Matt. xviii. 15: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone,"

and in I Cor. vi. 5: "Is it so that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?" and in Eph. v. 11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"; and in Phil. i. 27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ; that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel"; and in I Pet. iii. 15: "And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear"; and in Matt. x. 32, 33: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven"; and in Heb. x. 24: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works"; and finally, James v. 19, 20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

From all this it is apparent that every Christian not only has the office of the ministry, but that he also, if he at all wishes to be a Christian, must perform its duties, so that he also confesses the Word, teaches, admonishes, confesses, reproves, and in every way has a care for his neighbor's salvation; that is, for his conversion as well as for his preservation in the faith. In all things a Christian must show that he is a spiritual priest over against his own people, his own spouse, his own children, his own brothers and sisters, his own servants, his own neighbors and friends, and over against *all,* where and when God brings him into contact with them. For all men he shall perform the ministry of the Word in burning love and pious wisdom.

But the Lord sees, secondly, how Christians are beset by the frailties of flesh and blood, and on account of this frailty and weakness of the average Christian, God has instituted a special office of the ministry of the Word. According to God's Word certain persons who are prepared, gifted, equipped and tried for this office should be elected, called and set aside from the Christians in general, to perform these offices publicly among them, and in their name these preach the Word and administer the Sacraments, lead their meetings for mutual edification through God's Word, and are, in fine, the mouth of the Christians.

Wherever the holy apostles established Christian congregations, they, at their departure, did not entrust the office of mutual edification to the converted congregations, so that anyone could publicly teach and lead the others, but they placed certain persons, called elders or bishops, as leaders or overseers. Paul says to his companion and co-worker Titus: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee. If any be blameless . . .

for a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God . . . holding fast to the faithful words as he has been taught" (Titus i. 5-11). These elders or bishops did not only have the call, like other Christians, to use God's Word over against their neighbors as spiritual priests, but they had definite congregations, whose spiritual service was entrusted to them alone. Peter therefore writes: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder. . . . Feed the flock of God which is among you" (I Pet. v. 1, 2). This is not only a good human ordinance, but it is an ordinance instituted by God Himself. Although the congregations elect their own elders or bishops, the Bible declares expressly that they are likewise instituted by God just as truly as the holy apostles and prophets. For St. Paul writes: "And he [Christ, God's Son] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph. iv. 11); and to such bishops as were elected by the congregations, the same apostle says: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Acts xx. 28). Although Christians in their proper callings should teach privately, they should not put themselves forward as teachers of the whole congregation, or watch over it, or rule it, as this is the function of certain *called* persons. For it is written: "Obey them that have rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account" (Heb. xiii. 17). Again, it is written: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine." Such bishops are indeed called the angels of the church (Rev. ii. 1, 8, 12, 18; iii. 1, 7, 14).

The public ministry is therefore a gracious institution of the merciful God, whereby God's Word can henceforth be richly and purely preached and false prophets be warded off, and the Sacraments be properly administered. Thus God's whole dispensation, whether in the Church or the local congregation, is carried out in a good, blessed, and God-pleasing manner.

Although all believing Christians in virtue of their faith have the office of priests, yet they should not perform their duties in such a way that they disturb or abolish the divinely instituted public ministry of the Word. As urgently as the Bible exhorts Christians to be faithful and zealous in the fulfilment of their duties, it nevertheless says: "My brethren, be not many masters" (Jas. iii. 1), and Paul, after saying, "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, etc.," asks: "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?" (I Cor. xii. 28, 29). In Romans the same apostle says: "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" In public assemblies arranged for edification, the lay Christian should not teach, admonish, console, correct, lead in prayer or publicly administer the Sacraments of Baptism or the Lord's Supper, as these are functions reserved for the Christians properly called and ordained by God for this purpose.

But, thirdly, necessity knows no law. In case of need, as, for instance, if the Christians have no publicly appointed pastor, or if he be a false prophet, or if he serves them so seldom that they are in danger of spiritual starvation in case nothing more were done among them, then it is not wrong if also laymen in such cases of need preach the Word and pray in public assemblies or publicly administer Baptism. For, since they as spiritual priests already have the office but refrain from its exercise only for the sake of order, and, since the dispensation is merely instituted for the sake of salvation, it is right that they in case of need break the mere ordinance and confidently use the right which they originally had, and hope that God in mercy will regard them and bless them. But they do not function according to the ordinance of God, but as emergency pastors lest needy souls be lost. The Lutheran Symbols therefore say: "Just as in a case of necessity even a layman absolves, and becomes the minister and pastor of another; as Augustine narrates the story of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the catechumen, who after baptism then absolved the baptizer." (Scmalcald Articles, App., Part II, 67, Jacob's People's Ed., p. 350.) So much for Walther's exposition.

After a very thorough discussion, in which both the Synod and the Rasmussen factions took part freely, the following theses were drawn up as a final settlement of the controversy between the Synod and Rasmussen:

1. God has instituted the office of the public ministry for the public edification of Christians to salvation through God's Word. Unanimously accepted.
2. For the public edification of Christians, God has not instituted any other order which should be placed by the side of this. Unanimously accepted.
3. When one undertakes to lead the public edification of Christians by the Word, he undertakes and exercises the office of the public ministry. Unanimously accepted.
4. It is sin when anyone without a call or in the absence of need undertakes this. Unanimously accepted.
5. It is both a right and a duty in case of real need for anyone who can to exercise in proper Christian order the office of public ministry. Unanimously accepted.
6. The only correct conception of need is that actual need exists, either where there is no pastor or one cannot be gotten; or if there is a pastor who does not rightly serve them, but teaches falsely; or who cannot serve them sufficiently, but so insufficiently that they cannot be brought to faith or be preserved in faith and guarded against error, and that Christians would succumb from lack of oversight. Two voted against.
7. When such need is at hand, it ought to be relieved by a definite and proper order, according to the circumstances. Unanimously accepted.[88]

[88] Text in *K. Maanedstidende*, 1862, 228.

This agreement removed the remaining obstacles in the way of church union, and Revs. P. A. Rasmussen, Nils Amlund, and John N. Fjeld forthwith joined the Norwegian Synod. Rev. H. L. Thalberg did not join the Synod, but carried on his work independently until 1887; in 1890 he left for Norway. This was preëminently a victory for a moderately high-churchly anti-Ellingianism, back of which "Missouri" became more and more the directing force. Even if "laymen's activity" no longer was a domestic issue within the Synod, it became more than ever the issue between the Synod, on the one hand, and the Augustanans and Eielsen, on the other.

CHAPTER IX

DIVERGENT SYNODICAL ACTIVITIES

III. Growth—Schools

In the decade ending in December, 1860, much had taken place. Synods had been organized and dissolved, battles had been waged and unnatural alliances dissolved: Rasmussen had left Eielsen, and the Scandinavians had withdrawn from the Northern Illinois Synod. Two major issues—regarding the text of the Third Article of the *Creed* and "laymen's activity"—had been settled, one, permanently, the other temporarily, at least. The Synod had emerged strong and unified, the others, comparatively wounded and weakened.

During this time the synods had grown apace. Eielsen's Synod by 1860 had five pastors who served congregations in Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa, and possibly other states whither Eielsen had penetrated. The Scandinavian Augustana Synod, at its organization in 1860, had eight Norwegian pastors, eight churches, thirteen Norwegian congregations, and 1,220 communicants. At its organizational meeting eight other pastors were ordained, at least one of whom, Osmund Scheldahl, was a Norwegian.[1] The Norwegian Synod also enjoyed a very vigorous growth during this time.[2] To the seventeen congregations that accepted the Norwegian Synod constitution in 1853 were added twenty-one in 1855, two in 1857, eleven in 1859, and eighteen in 1861, making a grand total in 1861 of sixty-nine congregations actually belonging to the Synod. From the president's report that eighty congregations had no resident pastor, it is apparent that about ninety-five congregations were served by its pastors in 1861.[3] Of the seven pastors who took part in the organization of the Norwegian Synod in 1853,[4] one, Rev. C. L. Clausen, had retired from the active ministry in 1851, but was readmitted into the Synod in 1861; he had in the meantime served at St. Ansgar, Iowa, in various capacities. Other pastors were admitted into the Synod as follows: U. V. Koren and O. F. Duus, 1854; J. St. Munch, 1857; P. Brodahl, C. F. Magelssen, Laur. Larsen, F. C. Clausen, N. E. Jensen, and B. J. Muus, 1859; and H.

[1] E. Norelius, *Ev. Luth. Augustana-Synoden i Nord Amerika* (1870), 27. Also O. M. Norlie, *Norsk Lutherske Prester i Amerika.*

[2] See Halvorsen, *Festskrift*, 83.

[3] See President A. C. Preus, "Report to the Synod in 1861," in *K. Maanedstidende*, 1861, 228.

[4] See above, 129.

P. Duborg, 1860. The latter, a Schleswigian, was admitted from the "Missouri" Synod. At Rev. C. L. Clausen's readmission in 1861, the pastoral list contained fourteen names.[5] Rev. H. A. Stub went to Norway for his health in 1861 and remained there until 1865, when he returned for a long pastorate in the Big Canoe congregation, Locust, Iowa.[6] At the meeting in 1861, Rev. A. C. Preus spoke about a certain occurrence in his family that made him long for the mother country; but at the insistence of his congregations and many friends, he decided to remain in America.

In spite of all its youthful foibles, Norwegian American Lutheranism was making splendid progress on the points of the Confessions, church government, and membership. The growth of the church, however, was not commensurate with the growth of the Norwegian population in America at this time. According to Dr. O. M. Norlie there were in 1840 hardly 1,000 Norwegians in this country; in 1850, about 15,000, of whom 12,678 were born in Norway; in 1860, about 50,000, of whom 43,995 were from Norway; and in 1870, about 150,000, of whom 114,240 were from Norway.[7]

This increase in immigration accentuated very sharply the great and growing need for ministers. Although some venturesome clergymen did come over to serve their countrymen, most of the Norwegian pastors preferred to do almost anything in Norway rather than go to America. When Rev. Laur. Larsen, as the envoy of the Synod, came to Norway in 1860,[8] he made a very strong appeal to the unappointed clergy, of whom there had been three hundred in 1857. He pictured the crying needs of the emigrants, and showed what heroic efforts were put forth by the few pastors already in America to serve their countrymen. Eight parishes were vacant, and eight others could easily be organized in case there was any hope of serving them. Norwegians were streaming into the old settlements and were founding new ones on every hand. It devolved upon the church to provide for the spiritual welfare of these, but *how* could it? The men already in the field were exerting themselves to the very limit. One, Rev. C. L. Clausen, had retired from the ministry as a result of broken health, and another, Rev. H. A. Stub, was about to retire for the same reason. The others were blessed with exceptionally good health and were destined to serve for an unusually long time, but at best the situation was none too good. Instead of expanding the work, there was a prospect of retrenchment if help were not forthcoming, as the pastors would not be able to stand the strain of their almost superhuman efforts for any length of time. Rev. B. J. Muus preached at twenty-two stations scattered over an area more than two hundred miles long, his parish equaling modern

[5] For list see *K. Maanedstidende,* 1861, 225, 234, 235.
[6] Johs. Jössendal, *Litt av Big Canoe Menighets Historie* (1923), 14 ff.
[7] O. M. Norlie, *op. cit.,* 27. Also see above, 19.
[8] See *K. Maanedstidende,* 1861, 40 ff., 67 ff. for Larsen's appeal.

Denmark in size.[9] Rev. N. Brandt had ten stations in several states; Rev. H. A. Preus, fifteen; and Rev. H. A. Stub, fifteen. It is the duty of the Norwegian Church to help us; and our first and most crying need is men, he said. As a result of Rev. Laur. Larsen's pleadings, a few young men did agree to come to America, though the immediate fruit of his mission was not very great. From his general impression of the Church of Norway, Larsen concluded that very little help could be expected from that quarter; if the Norwegians in America wanted pastors they would have to train them in their own schools on American soil.

To this all-important project the young church bodies were to direct a great deal of their energies within the next decade or so. Since no unanimity existed among them, each faction, of course, had to build its own school in competition with the others.

By far the most important event in Norwegian American Lutheranism, next to the founding of synods, was the founding of schools. The schools were not only training stations for the leaders out on the spiritual battlefields, but they were themselves an embodiment of the ideals and aspirations of their respective founders. Cherished as the very pupil of the eye, borne up by the energies, resources, and prayers of their supporters, enfolded with all the pride and love of high and low, watched with the happy or sorrowful eye of an overfond parent, the schools became not only the focus of attention, but the centers of synodical activity and interest. In return, the synods expected much—too much—from their schools. The schools should be advanced posts where ever-waking sentinels would stand high on Zion's walls and keep watch over every move both among the pagan Philistines and the "near-Christian" Samaritans. Not only that, but the schools, as the board of strategy, should interpret their moves and devise counter moves. In the full realization of their grave responsibility, the faculties of these schools became the centers of controversy and the leading spirits in both the offensive and the defensive warfare. Moreover, just as Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson had returned from a visit to the Mother Church in Norway with the realization that the church in America had to solve its own problems of church extension, so Rev. Laur. Larsen, destined to be an educational leader among the Norwegian Americans, returned from Norway in 1860 with a clear conception that the young Norwegian Lutheran Synod would have to provide its own teachers and leaders.[10] The schools made these American Lutherans forever independent of the Mother Church and entirely capable of managing their own affairs; henceforth interference from Norway was not received with filial respect by these children who had been thrown upon their own resources. With these ties cut, the only alternative was for these immigrants to cast their lot unequivocally with their adopted land. These are a few of the complex ramifications of the school question.

[9] O. M. Norlie, *op. cit.*, 23.

[10] Further reports of this trip, below, 197.

Chief among the resulting schools in point of influence and service is Luther College, an institution founded in 1861 by the Norwegian Synod. While each of the other two synods existing at this time, Eielsen's and the Scandinavian Augustana, have school traditions which antedate the founding of Luther College, their schools did not exert such widespread influence, if they at all survived. In few things were the differences between the Synod and the other bodies so markedly contrasted as in the matter of schools. Schools were placed first on the Synod's program, with home-missions among their countrymen in America second, and foreign missions third. The other two concentrated their interests in a sliding scale on home missions, foreign missions, and schools.

There is a historic reason for this great diversity of interests. Interest in foreign missions was strong in Haugean circles at Stavanger, possibly through influences from the Herrnhuts or the Quakers. As early as 1826, when the Quakers and Haugeans were making common cause against the overbearing state officials,[11] the first missionary society for the conversion of the heathen was established.[12] John Haugvaldstad, Hauge's successor, energetically supported this cause, with the result that by 1841 sixty local societies were established. On August 8, 1842, these were organized into *The Norwegian Missionary Society,* which established its own missionary school. Though it had the support of Prof. Kaurin of the theological faculty of the university at Christiania, it was a young man, Hans Palludan Smith Schreuder, who kindled such a warm flame of missionary interest that it has not subsided to this day. His ringing appeal, *A Few Words to the Norwegian Church,* could not be answered by the State Church, as the State Church had almost insurmountable obstacles to overcome before it could conduct foreign missions; a State Church by its very nature simply is not a missionary church.

But if the State Church was unable or unwilling to respond, the Norwegian church people responded with enthusiasm. The State Church's inability to act made the Haugeans more than ever the promoters of foreign missions, Haugeanism and foreign missions thus becoming closely linked in the popular mind. Foreign missions became a genuinely popular activity, conducted by the *people,* and not by the officials of the State. In a time when sharp distinctions were drawn between the office-holding estates and the common people, the turn of affairs which made this cause a people's cause was of paramount importance. The people had begun to assert their social, religious, and political rights over against the ruling estates in 1836, and now foreign missions became another cause which the Haugeans, in the name of the people, were promulgating. This new popular issue, as it really became, auspiciously came to a head in 1842, when the Haugean movement was on a decline after it had exerted itself

[11] See above, 25 ff.
[12] See above, 56 ff.

to the utmost to bring about political and social reforms.[13] Foreign missions thus became the outlet for the popular religious energies that had by no means spent themselves. It was the people—the people—that espoused foreign missions and made it the object of its spontaneous interest and loving care.

No wonder, then, that the groups in America like the Ellingians and Augustanans, who claim to be the propagators of genuine Haugeanism, should espouse foreign missions. Sparks from the flames kindled by Schreuder also started fires in nearby fields; it was the foreign mission impulse that drove several of the early pastors—Clausen, Stub, and others—into the home-mission fields in America.

It was far different with the question of higher education. Although the Royal Frederik University in Christiania, founded in 1813, is about a decade and a half older than the first mission society founded at Stavanger in 1826, the people at large took very little interest in the university. The university was sponsored by the office-holding class and built by the State, and, according to the concepts of the day, it was to be used practically altogether by members of the "conditioned," office-holding classes. This educational conception was never baldly stated; yet in such a number of ways had the common people been shown their proper place, that exceedingly few of their young men, regardless of their talent and promise, ventured to enter the university. To do so was to risk being snubbed by the entrenched classes of privileged youth, on the one hand, and ostracized from their own (lower) social class at home, on the other. Indeed, pioneers have often related how the sons of the wealthy landed clergy spent what the pioneers thought was an unjustifiably long time at school, and then came home and waited for years for a pastoral or other professional appointment.[14] With the professional classes already overfilled, and with a class system operating, so that sons were expected to take up their father's profession, and, of course, marry within their own class, it was not surprising that the upper classes did not encourage the lower to take up higher education, nor was it to be expected that the young men of the lower classes should wish to practically break with their own class for the doubtful rewards of higher education. When the son of a *"bonde"* fell in love with a girl in the "conditioned" class, she might have spirit enough to demand that proper provision be made for her betrothed, in which case he sometimes was sent to the university in order to elevate him into the "conditioned" class.[15]

With this sharp cleavage between the classes practically barring the sons of the common people from the university, it was not surprising that the common people failed to give the university

[13] This decline set in in 1839. See above, 51 ff.

[14] For the unappointed clergy see Prof. Larsen's report, above, 181.

[15] Girls were not admitted to the university. The wealthy hired a tutor who instructed the boys and girls to a point where the boys could enter some higher school, at which point the education of the girls was regarded as sufficient.

cordial support. If anything, the university became a source of irritation, as it very frankly catered to the "conditioned" classes and became an instrument for the perpetuation of a class, which, during the social revolution stretching roughly from 1826 to 1840, was blamed for all the social and economic ills of the common people. The university had regained the confidence of the people to some extent through the work of Gisle Johnson and Carl Paul Caspari, but on account of the slow working of the composite Norwegian mind, it continued to be associated with an odious social system long after that system's dissolution. In the mind of the average emigrated Norwegian, higher education was bolstered up practically altogether by official support; it was *by* and *for* the office-holding classes. Missions, on the other hand, were supported by the common people as their pet project; foreign missions were *by* and *for* the common people.

Besides taking a prominent part in these social conflicts, the Haugeans more especially looked upon the university as the fallow seed-bed of academic Christianity which as yet commanded neither their respect nor their confidence. When their leaders on American soil saw in the higher institutions of learning their only hope for procuring trained workers, the people grudgingly supported them, so that after infinite labor schools were indeed built. But the lay Haugean movement, built fundamentally on the principle of "laymen's activity," naturally could not muster much enthusiasm for a project that would superpose a pastoral class over the "laymen." Consequently neither the Ellingians nor the Augustanans were able to popularize higher education. This task was reserved for the Norwegian Synod, although its success was very variable after the first flush of enthusiasm by which Luther College was built in 1861.

There is a tradition often repeated in Eielsen's Synod,[16] but as often denied by the Augustanans,[17] that Eielsen made arrangements to have Paul Anderson receive instruction from a Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Lemuel Hall. No date is given for Eielsen's good offices; but if this took place, it must be regarded as having taken place before Anderson entered Beloit College sometime around 1844, or possibly a year or two later.

Even if there may be doubt in regard to Eielsen's part in getting Paul Anderson off to school, inasmuch as Paul Anderson himself denies him any share in it, there can be no doubt that Eielsen wrote into the *Old Constitution*[18] the recommendation that "Those who are gifted with aptitude for teaching must procure the necessary knowledge as far as circumstances permit." Without stopping to inquire what Eielsen might have meant by "necessary knowledge as far as

[16] E.g. Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed*, 79; and *Festskrift i Anledning Red Wing Seminariums Femogtyve Aars Jubilaeum* (1904), 6.

[17] E.g. Hatlestad, *Historiske Meddelelser*, 56; and Rev. J. C. Jensson, *American Lutheran Biographies*, 25-27. See also above, 95.

[18] Paragraph nine, see above, 108.

circumstances permit," we see that Eielsen does take a stand for education in this *Constitution.*

A third link in the chain of evidence that Eielsen had some interest in education is the fact that his synod established the first school for training teachers and preachers among the Norwegians in America. At the yearly meeting of Eielsen's Synod at Lisbon, Illinois, in 1854 Eielsen moved that, in view of the great need for pastors, they should establish "a seminary for the instruction of talented young people in the knowledge most necessary for the performance of said office." This motion was seconded by Rev. P. A. Rasmussen and was unanimously adopted. At the same meeting it was decided to buy forty acres of land at Lisbon, on which stood a large dwelling. N. N. Rönning says that the deal was closed before the meeting adjourned, and that eighteen hundred dollars was paid for it.[19] In *Der Lutheraner,* October 23, 1855, Rasmussen, the professor-elect of the school, in a report to the Spring Prairie meeting in June, 1855, said that *ours* (i.e. the Ellingians) had procured land in January of that year, 1855, but that teaching had not commenced up to Easter-time because he had been too busily engaged in translating and printing John Arndt's *True Christianity.* He hoped to begin teaching in October, however, and would welcome those who were from eighteen to thirty years of age; but in case anyone from fourteen to eighteen showed proper Christian character, he would welcome these also.[20] In the report of the Ellingians' meeting at Koshkonong, October, 1855, Rasmussen said that it had been decided that the schools should open "this month" (October). Then he continues:[21] "Rasmussen remarked that three pupils had reported their coming, and he wished now to have the meeting express its opinion whether it was not best to make a start even with these three." It was so decided, the impression being that if only a start were made, more would enter later. With three students, Björn and Syver Holland and Olaus Landsverk, Prof. Rasmussen started the school at Lisbon and continued it until about May 1, 1856,[22] when it was discontinued because Rasmussen withdrew from Eielsen's Synod. While Rasmussen no doubt was the prime mover in this project, Eielsen took an interest in it and to some extent sponsored it. Thus the third link was broken.

Eielsen's next educational enterprise was the purchase in 1864 of one hundred and twenty acres of land near Deerfield, Wisconsin, on which there was a building. With candidate of theology, Andreas Aaseröd, as principal, the school opened in the fall of 1865. During the next two years an average of twenty pupils received instruction in religion, Norwegian and English grammar, arithmetic, algebra,

[19] *Red Wing Seminariums Festskrift,* 7.
[20] See also Rasmussen's printed *Report of the Spring Prairie Meeting in June, 1855,* 12.
[21] Rasmussen, *Kirkelig Tidende,* January, 1856 (Vol. I, No. I), 17.
[22] N. N. Rönning, in *Red Wing Seminariums Festskrift,* 8.

geometry, German and Latin. The well-educated Aaseröd undoubtedly deserved every cent of his salary, which was set at two hundred and eighty dollars a year and the use of sixty acres of land. Improvements on the buildings were planned, and efforts were put forth to secure a second teacher "when needed," but all these plans were shattered by Aaseröd's resignation after a little more than two years' service. As a suitable successor could not be found, the school was forced to close its doors.

The principalship of the "laymen's" college evidently was no sinecure. Beginning with Rasmussen, the principal of the first school, we have a long list of short-termed principals, whose resignations rocked the whole school system. Aaseröd's resignation possibly hinged on some detail, but back of this again is undoubtedly a series of incidents which made it clear to Aaseröd as well as to his lay constituency that there were certain insurmountable difficulties connected with the school. There was, for one thing, too wide a gap between Aaseröd and his nearest constituency, as even the most intelligent "laymen," who saw very clearly the need for educated leaders, were very unclear as to what the duties of the principal of their school should be. The whole field of higher education was outside of the realm of their experience, and it was not so strange that they should make impossible demands of their principal and set up impossible educational ideals. At best, the leaders who had interest in education were not many in number.

Throughout Eielsen's Synod there had been a persistent propaganda against the educated State Church clergy, and Eielsen was reaping what he had sowed. Many of the lay people laid great stress on things of minor importance, such as garments, gestures, and the like.

> There were homes where only religious books were tolerated; and there were parents who would not permit their children to read, even in school, any book not distinctively religious. The writer is personally acquainted with a man now living, who, while a boy of about fourteen, secretly came into possession of a geography, a book tabooed both by his father and pastor. When he was found out he even received a whipping for his disobedience.[23]

With such ideals surviving in Haugean lore, at least till 1919, what might the educational and cultural views of the first generation of Haugeans in America have been under the domination of Elling Eielsen? It was possibly too true that many of the Ellingians considered the higher schools as the "open doors to hell." [24] Nor does the calling of the educated Rev. H. L. Thalberg from Norway in 1854 prove, as N. N. Rönning thinks, that Eielsen valued educated

[23] M. O. Wee, *Haugeanism*, 55.
[24] N. N. Rönning, in *op. cit.*, 6.

men, for Rasmussen may have been the prime mover in this.[25] Had Thalberg remained with Eielsen, the argument would have had some weight; as it is, Thalberg's leaving merely marks the passing of another educated man from Eielsen's ranks. Whatever the reason, Aaseröd did resign and the school collapsed at his resignation. Somehow Elling's schools did not thrive; their faint light flickered for a time and then went out. In a way these ill-fated educational ventures were martyrs to a cause that was so diametrically opposed to the uneducated "lay system" that, since no compromise was thought possible between them at the time, the weakest had to succumb. As true martyrs, these schools left a tradition of dissent which hastened the day when the cause would have enough friends to survive the shock of attack and even of resignations.

All glory to the sturdy educational pioneers in the Haugean group who held out in the face of the most discouraging reverses! At almost every yearly and quarterly meeting of the Ellingian synod, they persistently brought the matter to the fore, and finally it was agreed in 1868 that a school should be established in Red Wing, provided a principal could be procured who fully shared the conception of Hauge's friends. Two and one-half acres of land were bought at Red Wing, and to the eight hundred dollars realized over and above the indebtedness from the sale of the Deerfield school were added twenty-five hundred dollars in a short time. Rev. Östen Hanson, the prime mover in this project, reported in 1870 that, though much stone had been hauled and some cut, the work was suspended for lack of means.

> In case [he says] we desire to preserve and support the pure truth among ourselves, to further schools, good knowledge, and correct enlightenment for ourselves and our children, and to disseminate the Word of Life among our fellowmen to the salvation of their souls, then the Lord demands . . . that we should renounce stinginess and offer something of this world's goods for the promotion of God's Kingdom.[26]

In this dark hour, an offer came from Trinity congregation in Chicago to erect a building large enough both for a church and a school. Some help could be expected from the non-Lutheran citizens of Chicago and from the twenty thousand Norwegians there. To add still more color to the rosy proposition, it was calculated that enough of the school's room could be rented out to make the school well-nigh self-supporting. For this fanciful proposition seventeen votes were cast, and for the pile of stone and mortar at Red Wing seventeen other votes were cast. To resolve this tie vote, lots were cast despite the protests of many, and the lot fell on Chi-

[25] Thalberg himself denies that he was called by the Ellingians, though the evidence points in the opposite direction. (See *K. Maanedstidende,* 1859, 182.)

[26] *Red Wing Seminariums Festskrift,* 12

cago. To satisfy the disgruntled westerners, it was decided next day to build two schools, one in Red Wing and one in Chicago. This motion was reconsidered, and it was finally determined that all should support the Chicago project.

On August 27, 1871, the cornerstone of "Hauge's College and Eielsen's Seminary" was formally laid, Rev. Elling Eielsen making the chief address. In well-chosen words he depicted the great need of true Christian and civil enlightenment for a person who must at the same time be a true Christian and a useful citizen. True enlightenment is gotten only from Him who is the light of the world, whose honor and glory the youth who pass in and out of these halls shall go forth and proclaim.[27]

But the project that received such a fair start was to share the fate of its predecessors. In 1877 the idea of building a school in Chicago was abandoned, partly because no local support was given as Chicago had been laid in ashes by the terrible fire, partly because the West failed to give much support as crops were poor, and partly also because the westerners felt that the school should have been at Red Wing. On the property, which was worth thirty-four thousand dollars, a debt of sixteen thousand dollars had accrued. Consequently the convention of 1877 decided to abandon the Chicago school, leaving the property to the Trinity congregation on condition that the latter pay all the indebtedness. Seven years had thus been consumed in which no substantial progress had been made in the building project, and only a very little class instruction had been given. Rev. C. O. Brohaugh declared that the whole school project had been one continual chain of disappointments.

The only redeeming feature was that people had been aroused to the need of a school and were willing to sacrifice for the cause. Up to its last year at least, Rev. Elling Eielsen had given the cause both his financial and moral support, subscribing two hundred dollars at one time and encouraging others to give according to their ability. Others, who were in great financial straits themselves, gave from seventy-five dollars to one hundred and fifty dollars. Smaller gifts were also made, though the unfortunate decision to abandon the work already under way in Red Wing, for the questionable Chicago proposition, prevented this cause from becoming popular at this time. But Christian education had gained a great deal of ground; that everyone felt. It was the sense of the convention of 1877 that the cause should be carried forward. "If a seaman," they said, "once, yes, several times, suffers shipwreck, he nevertheless goes out to sea again; and if a farmer loses his crop one year, he still sows again next year in hope of a better harvest." [28]

When an opportunity came to procure a building and site at Red Wing, Hans Markussen Sande, on January 8, 1878, bought the property, worth twenty thousand dollars, for ten thousand dollars, mort-

[27] Rönning, *op. cit.*, 13.
[28] *Ibid.*, 14.

gaging his farm to do so. Hauge's Synod, organized in 1875, took over the property, and the school opened in September, 1879, with Rev. I. Eisteinsen as temporary theological professor and acting president of the seminary, and Mr. G. O. Brohaugh as teacher of English and principal of the academy. Henceforth Christian education among those who formerly were the Ellingians went from victory to victory.

Before this could happen the thoroughgoing "lay system" had passed away, and a different type of churchmanship had little by little arisen. No one felt this more keenly than Eielsen himself. With Eielsen's consent, these new forces had revised the *Old Constitution* in 1875 and called the church body with the revised constitution *Hauge's Synod.*[29] Eielsen probably did not fully understand what was going on, as he was now an old man. But he felt that something must be wrong when his "friends" would no longer either have his *Old Constitution* or have him as president. At the meeting in Jackson County, Minnesota, in the winter of 1876, Eielsen and some six or seven others organized themselves on the basis of the *Old Constitution,* and elected Eielsen president. These men, who called themselves the *old tendency,* in a most violent manner attacked the pastors of the Hauge's Synod, whom they called the *new tendency,* especially on the point of the "free" Gospel. Eielsen's personal views were set down in a letter to the Hauge's Synod—probably written for him by someone else—stating that the newly organized synod harbored "new and dangerous tendencies in the direction of hierarchy and church formality." [30] Hauge's Synod made answer in a sharp resolution declaring that Eielsen was not a member of said church until he had recalled his accusations against its pastors, and also had subscribed to the Hauge's Synod constitution.[31] This Eielsen refused to do, of course, and hereby his connections with the Hauge's Synod were automatically severed. This was in 1876. It was thus only two years after Eielsen's withdrawal that the school project won its first and lasting victory; in Eielsen's little group no school has been built to this day, and his synod has now only six pastors. Eielsen thus has no share in a single successful educational venture.

In regard to the Augustanans, not much can be said of their educational projects at this time, as it was some years later that the Norwegian group in the Augustana Synod launched out on an educational venture of their own. As members of the Northern Illinois Synod, the Norwegians took a very great interest in the foundation by their synod of the Illinois State University at Springfield, Illinois. In this project, Rev. Paul Anderson took an especially prominent part, both as the foremost Norwegian churchman in his

[29] E. O. Mörstad, *Elling Eielsen og den "Ev. Luth. Kirke" i Amerika,* 369 ff.
[30] *Ibid.,* 379.
[31] Brohaugh and Eisteinsen, *Elling Eielsens Liv og Virksomhed,* 130.

group, and as president of the Northern Illinois Synod in 1857-58. *Kirketidende,* the organ of the Norwegian group in the Northern Illinois Synod, did all it could for the cause both under Hatlestad's and Andrewsen's ownership.[32] This paper was especially enthusiastic over Rev. Lars Paul Esbjörn's appointment to the chair of theology at the Illinois State University in 1858. At this time, too, it resented very strongly the attacks leveled against the General Synod by "Missouri" and the Norwegian Synod. But when the tide turned, and Prof. S. S. Schmucker's party in the General Synod attempted to impose its loose "American Lutheranism" on the Springfield school, the Norwegians joined the Swedes in denouncing this confessional laxity as un-Lutheran. In reply, the Schmuckerites denounced the Scandinavians as a "formalistic and super-orthodox Symbolist party." As a result of this struggle Esbjörn and the Scandinavian students left Springfield in 1860 and went first to Chicago and then to Paxton, Illinois, where they founded a school of their own.[33] To further emphasize their confessionalism, they called their school "The Augustana College Seminary" in honor of the *Augustana,* as the *Augsburg Confession* is sometimes called.

In 1868 Rev. A. Weenaas was appointed professor at Paxton.[34] Born in Christiania, Norway, in 1835, he attended Christiania University 1853-60 (A.M., C.T.) and came to America in 1868. Greatly influenced by the awakening under Gisle Johnson, he was highly regarded also in Haugean circles. Not a man of exceptional parts, he had, on the other hand, good health and an unlimited amount of energy, was an inspiring teacher and an able writer. He had not been in Paxton long before he began to urge a separation of the Norwegians and Swedes.[35] In 1869 the school was divided, and the Norwegian section, called *Augsburg Seminary,* was removed to Marshall, Wisconsin, where the Norwegians had bought a school building and campus worth eleven thousand dollars for four thousand dollars. What made this wonderful bargain possible was the willingness of the Norwegians to agree to the stipulation that a "complete American academy" be maintained in connection with the school.

After the school had thus been divided, Weenaas continued his agitation for a separation of the Scandinavian Augustana Synod along national lines. As a result of his agitation, the Swedes and Norwegians in 1870 decided to part company. Strangely enough, this was accomplished without any hard feelings on either side, the actual separation taking place at Andover, Illinois, in 1870. Henceforth the Swedes called themselves *The Swedish Augustana Synod,* from which the word "Swedish" was later dropped.

It was natural that the Norwegians should organize themselves into a corresponding Norwegian-Danish synod, and steps were taken

[32] See above, 140. [33] See above, 166 ff.

[34] Biographies of Weenaas in O. M. Norlie, *Norsk Lutherske Prester,* and J. A. Bergh, *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika.*

[35] O. J. Hatlestad, *Historiske Meddelelser,* 77.

in that direction on June 17, 1870. Pending negotiations with Rev. C. L. Clausen and Rev. B. Gjeldaker, the Andover delegates chose to organize themselves temporarily as *The Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod;* after electing Rev. O. J. Hatlestad as president and Rev. Müller Eggen as secretary, the meeting adjourned. In conjunction with Clausen and Gjeldaker, the delegates again met at St. Ansgar, Iowa, August 10, 1870, and perfected the organization. At Clausen's suggestion the new body adopted the following name: *The Conference for the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,* better known as *the Conference.* Clausen was elected president and Eggen secretary of this new organization.

Immediately there appeared a fly in the ointment. Rev. O. J. Hatlestad, who felt slighted for several reasons, issued a call for a meeting at Jefferson Prairie for October 5, 1870. Together with Revs. David Lysnes, Ole Andrewsen, Andrew Scheie, and others, Hatlestad now declared the action of the St. Ansgar meeting invalid, and proceeded to complete the organization of the *Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod,* as though nothing had previously been done.

In the controversy that ensued between the Augustana Synod and the Conference, the Augustanans had the satisfaction of getting possession of the Marshall property, which, however, by this time was weighed down by a four thousand dollar debt. Undismayed by this, the handful of Augustanans set about to pay the debt and were successful in maintaining an academy at Marshall. They also maintained a theological school, of which Rev. David Lysnes was president, at Springfield parsonage, Winneshiek County, Iowa. In 1876 Rev. David Lysnes and his theological students moved to Marshall, Wisconsin. In 1881 the academy and theological seminary were moved to Beloit, Lyon County, Iowa, where the school soon outgrew its quarters. To relieve this situation, the citizens of Canton, South Dakota, which is a mile from Beloit, Iowa, offered the school a building which originally had cost eight thousand dollars. In 1884 the college and academy were moved to Canton, while the theological school remained at Beloit.[36] In 1918 Augustana College was moved to Sioux Falls, where it was combined with the Lutheran Normal School and given the name *Augustana College and Normal School.* It is now (1926) one of the four colleges of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

As their share of the divided Marshall school, Prof. A. Weenaas and the Conference took the student body and moved into three upstairs rooms in a farmhouse on the outskirts of the village of Marshall, Wisconsin. Of these three rooms, one was used for a classroom, the other two for students' rooms. A few students, including Gjermund Hoyme, roomed at Prof. Weenaas's home. In these cramped quarters, with Weenaas the target of very bitter attacks, most of which he had invited, the school passed through a crisis in the winter of 1870-71. Thoroughly disheartened by his difficulties

[36] *Ibid.,* 75 ff.

and by the fact that some whom he had counted upon for support kept at a distance, Weenaas called his small student body together and told them he could bear it no longer. The students arose and as one man pledged him their full support, and offered to suffer want, if need be,—not a distant prospect, by the way—for the school and the cause of the Conference. Joining hands about the table as a pledge of this, they succeeded in consoling their teacher; with God and this sort of young men he could do anything. The Conference and Augsburg Seminary had hung in the balance; both were saved by the students, prominent among them being Gjermund Hoyme, later president of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church. In 1871 it was decided to have the school—which was completely unattached, as it consisted only of students and Prof. Weenaas—to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where a suitable building was taken into use in 1872. In 1873 candidate of theology Sven Oftedal was called to Augsburg as professor to assist Weenaas.[37] Sven Oftedal's brother, Lars, was a leader of the Oftedölinger in the Norwegian Storthing; both were typical Stavangerings. Weenaas soon found this partnership less desirable than anticipated. His dissatisfaction on this score, the loss of his beloved wife, and almost incessant controversies made him tired of America. When he left for Norway in 1876 he had the satisfaction of knowing, however, that both Augsburg Seminary and the Conference were on a relatively sound basis. Augsburg Seminary now belongs to the Norwegian Lutheran Free Church.

As already indicated,[38] the school question in the Norwegian Synod is older than the Synod itself. Before 1852 a discussion arose as to whether or not the Synod should arrange to establish a professorship at Capital University, Columbus, Ohio. The Norwegians were not quite convinced that Ohio was the best friend they could find in America, hence no definite steps were taken either at the Synod meeting in 1852 or in the following years to carry out the plan broached by the Ohioans. In spite of the continual agitation of the subject in *Maanedstidende,* its successor, *Kirkelig Maanedstidende,* and *Emigranten,* and the increasingly inadequate pastoral supply from Norway, no great enthusiasm was aroused for a professorship at either Columbus, Ohio, Buffalo, New York, or St. Louis, Missouri, possibly because all of these were carried on by Germans, toward whom the Norwegians, as a result of the Dano-Prussian difficulties in Schleswig-Holstein which had fanned Pan-Scandinavianism into vigorous life, were not very friendly. Rev. A. C. Preus issued an appeal for four hundred dollars in 1856 to send delegates to the three above-mentioned places. He replied to an objector, who said that an institution should be built by and for the Norwegians, by saying that "the best would certainly be good enough." [39] In 1857 the Synod, at its meeting in Little Iowa church,

[37] J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.,*
[38] See above, 120.
[39] *Emigranten,* February 8, 1856.

Winneshiek County, Iowa, heard the reports of Ottesen and Brandt about their visits to St. Louis, Fort Wayne, Columbus, and Buffalo. "Missouri" impressed them most. The "Missourians," they said, were "all actuated by the spirit which rules at the university (at St. Louis): a sincere devotion to the Symbols and the doctrine of the fathers and a hearty trust in God that therein his Holy Word is rightly explained and interpreted. Consequently they manifest a self-sacrificing, yes, burning zeal to carry out these old-Lutheran principles in their doctrine as well as their church polity."[40] The "Missourians" imposed a watchful discipline on their congregations in spite of the fact that they quite generally lost such as would not submit. The emissaries received a less favorable impression of the Joint Ohio institution; about Buffalo they reported its losing fight with "Missouri" in regard to the doctrine of the Church, in which Buffalo stressed too much the visible Church, while "Missouri" stressed the point that the true Church is invisible. While at St. Louis, the Synod envoys had taken the opportunity to counteract the impression spread abroad by Rev. P. A. Rasmussen, that the Synod held views which to "Missouri" must have seemed essentially in accord with Buffalo.[41]

On the basis of this report, the meeting at Little Iowa declared that, though it would rather build an institution of its own, the Synod should appoint a professor to St. Louis. Three advantages would accrue: (1) Pastors would be procured in the immediate future; (2) insight and experience would be gained for the erection of their own institution; (3) a connection with a synod tried in church conflicts and grounded on the Lutheran foundation would increase the Synod's Christian and churchly insight and power. The Synod likewise determined to build an institution of its own, for which purpose a fund was immediately to be collected, the interest of which should be applied to a professor's salary, when one was called. In case the uncertainty of the present grave political situation made it necessary, the Synod would have to establish its own school with the means at hand.[42] In the course of the discussion John Evensen from Iowa subscribed one hundred dollars on condition that two hundred and fifty others should do the same. It was also decided that, though seven calls had been issued during the last year and only one pastor had responded, the Synod would, nevertheless, not at this time ordain parochial teachers and others who, though well-meaning enough, did not have the proper theological training.

Almost as important as the establishment of the school was the question of the proper man for the presidency of the institution. The church council issued a call to Rev. Oluf Aabel to the professorship at St. Louis, with which the presidency of the future institution was most intimately connected.[43] Although Aabel did not

[40] For report see *K. Maanedstidende*, 1857, 476 ff.
[41] See *Der Lutheraner*, March, 1858, and *Kirkelig Maanedstidende*, 1858, 6.
[42] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1858, 7. [43] *Ibid.*, 1858, 132.

accept the call, delaying the appointment of a professor a whole year, three students (Torger A. Torgerson of Waupaca, Jacob Larsen of Pine Lake, and Lars S. Fosse of Norway Grove) [44] found their way in August, 1858, to Concordia College, St. Louis, Missouri, whither many Norwegian students were later to go in search of collegiate and theological instruction. In Aabel's stead, Rev. Laur. Larsen, Rush River, Wisconsin, was called to St. Louis. After some hesitation he accepted the call, the crying need overcoming his feeling of unfitness for the great and responsible position.[45]

Laur. Larsen, for forty-one years president of Luther College, and for fifty-four years professor there, was born in Christianssand, Norway, August 10, 1833, and was given the name Peter Laurentius.[46] Like Jonathan Edwards, he was a prodigy. Entering the cathedral school at nine, he received his bachelor of arts degree at seventeen, as the undisputed head of the class. In 1850 he matriculated at Christiania University, and under the inspiring leadership of such men as Gisle Johnson and Carl Paul Caspari, this brilliant young man became so engrossed in his theological studies that his health was affected and he was compelled to desist from his work for half a year. By 1855 he had received both the master of arts and the candidate of theology degrees, whereupon he became a teacher of languages—German, French, and Hebrew—for two years. In 1857 he accepted a call to Rush River, Wisconsin, and as a frontier missionary covered portions of three states. At this time he is described as being "a handsome, black-haired young man of distinguished appearance, beautiful figure, erect bearing, and elastic movements." He has been designated as "the foremost educator among the Scandinavians," "the Nestor of our schoolmen," and "the Grand Old Man of Luther College." Devotion to duty, scrupulous stewardship of his time and energies, frugality and economy, a keen sense of justice, absolute surrender to objective truth, consistent and unswerving devotion to principle, hatred of humbug and pretense, simplicity, and system—these are some of the sterling qualities ascribed to this man by one who knew him quite well.[47] On the other hand, perhaps he was too objective to become a man of the people, too much out of touch with the life about him to see the practical results of a rigid application of valid objective principles, and so unswerving even in detail that the uninstructed failed to appreciate him at times. Like one who clearly saw the way ahead, he had little patience with the

[44] *Ibid.*, 1858, 176. Jacob Danielsen Ballestad, in a letter dated November 13, 1858, gave a list of kind Christian friends who had made it possible for him to go to St. Louis. (See *K. Maanedstidende*, 1858, 192). T. A. Torgerson later became the president of the Iowa District of the Norwegian Synod.

[45] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1859, 80.

[46] Biographies of this esteemed educator are found in practically any history of the Norwegians or of Luther College. Separate biographies are found in *Who's Who;* Norlie, *Norsk Lutherske Prester i Amerika;* and Hon. L. S. Swensen, "Prof. Dr. Laur. Larsen, De Norsk-Amerikanske Skolemänds Nestor," in *Symra*, 1909, 190.

[47] Hon. L. S. Swenson, *op. cit.*, *Symra*, 1909, 190-195.

doubting and timid opportunists who swerved hither and yon to get a fair breeze into their sails.

Such were some of the potential qualities of the young man selected to head the Norwegian Luther College when it should be built. An ardent home missionary, a zealous worker for the extension of the church, even crowding into his busy routine the care of the Decorah congregation for longer or shorter periods, an editor of *Kirketidende,* an ardent supporter of foreign missions, particularly in Africa—this man proved to be not only a great schoolman but a great missionary and friend of missions, and, withal, a prominent editor. All the activities of the church thus had a warm supporter in Prof. Larsen.

In fairness to those who sincerely disagreed with some of Larsen's early acts and ideas, it must be said that some of the above catalogue of virtues apply more properly to him in his later years. Prof. Larsen had the good fortune of living an unusually long time, and through the mellowing influence of age, the riper fruits of his labors were of a better quality than the early windfalls. In fact, Larsen, by virtue of his prominent position, was exposed to many fierce winds, and since his unbending frame would rather break than yield even in somewhat unimportant matters, it was natural that he should not always come unscathed out of these storms. There were undoubtedly also dead limbs of prejudice and preconceived ideas that needed to be swept away by the winds of controversy. At any rate, he did not loom so big in the eyes of his early contemporaries, who showed no hesitancy in opposing him, thus making him a veritable storm center.

Laur. Larsen entered upon his duties at St. Louis in 1859, on October 14—a date that later became the foundation day of Luther College and of most of its daughter schools. At St. Louis, Larsen came into intimate contact with Prof. (later Dr.) Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther (b. 1811, d. 1887), the peerless leader of the "Missouri" Synod, also known as "the Luther among the Germans in America." This great leader was originally of a pietistic turn of mind, but through a thorough study of Luther, he had not only acquired an unmatched knowledge of Lutheran doctrine, but had also imbibed Luther's spirit to a marvelous degree. As a result, he combined profound learning and invincible dialectical skill with the most childlike faith. The pious qualities of this well-proportioned theologian attracted the Haugean, Rev. P. A. Rasmussen, as well as the pastors of the Norwegian Synod. His great scholarship and untainted orthodoxy naturally also appealed to such men as Rev. H. A. Preus, Prof. Laur. Larsen, Rev. V. Koren and others of the Norwegian university group in the Synod.

The reflex influence of this man upon the Norwegian Synod pastors, therefore, was very great. Larsen, first of all, and secondly, the (Christiania) "university" pastors became the imperfect and partial bearers of the shaping influence of Dr. Walther. Not only

was the Royal Frederik University in Christiania patterned after the German type of university, but at that time the German spirit was influential at Christiania as well as at quite a number of other institutions of learning. Being well versed in German language and lore, the pastors, when they founded their own "university" in America, could not, of course, think of any other form than the German "gymnasium."

One result of the close connection with "Missouri" was that the Norwegian Synod was, even now, drifting away from the Church of Norway. As related above, Prof. Larsen was sent to Norway in 1860 and, on the whole, was not altogether optimistic as to what could be expected from the Church there. Members of the Mother Church had heard about the church controversies in America, and though they seemed to think that the Synod was right in its attitude toward Augustana, they quite generally sympathized with Rasmussen rather than the Synod in the quarrel between these two.[48] In turn, Larsen found the Norwegian Church too latitudinarian. Grundtvigianism had lost its hold at the university, but many of the educational leaders, notably O. Vig, were Grundtvigian. At the other extreme were the "awakened," who are "very pietistic and show this not only by their false conception of 'laymen's activity,' but also in an anxious fear lest the Gospel be taken in vain." Hardly ever do they preach a full Gospel of the salvation of the world, he says, but they preach salvation conditioned by conversion. "Just as many now wish to bring to naught the commandment of love by all kinds of human inventions, and just as the Grundtvigian, pietistic, and chiliastic errors now seek to make headway against the simple Lutheran-Christian truth which we confess, so it is entirely possible that all these aberrations will gain such power in the Norwegian Church that hope of help from them in the future may be in vain."[49] He found no one in Norway, he said, who could compare to the "learned and lovable" Prof. Walther—not even Johnson and Caspari. Nor did either Norwegian Grundtvigianism or Norwegian pietism satisfy, as he felt that the leaders thereof did not so zealously study Luther and the Lutheran Symbols. On the other hand, in America, he said, we were referred to these old, reliable sources, and it did not take long to realize that here is the truth. For that reason, we have the courage to stand up against any adversary, whoever he may be.[50]

Not long after his return to St. Louis in January, 1861, Prof. Larsen was again interrupted in his labors. Even before Lincoln's inauguration, political feeling in Missouri ran so high that riots were frequent.[51] In April, 1861, St. Louis finally became such an unsafe place to live in that Concordia College was closed, and Larsen and the

[48] *K. Maandestidende,* 1861, 67 ff. See above, 181, for Larsen's trip to Norway.

[49] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1861, 77. [50] J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.,* 191.

[51] See any newspaper from that time. *Emigranten,* 1861, describes many riots in which civilians and soldiers lost their lives.

Norwegian students came north. The students brought with them disquieting reports about the secessionistic attitude of the faculty at St. Louis,[52] and it was not long before Prof. Larsen found himself in the midst of a debate about slavery and secession, in which Prof. Larsen's cold reasoning made little headway against excited appeals to an inflamed public opinion. We shall leave to future consideration the effects on the Norwegian Lutherans by the issues of slavery and secession that shattered nearly every other religious body in America and divided the bodies at least into Northern and Southern groups. Once raised, the issue became irrepressible. A certain contributor to *Emigranten,* who signed himself "X" (which the typesetter made into a tell-tale "H"), challenged Prof. Larsen to give the views of the St. Louis faculty on the points of slavery and secession, and added that until these points were satisfactorily cleared up, all subscriptions to the "university fund" ought to cease. The Synod should without delay, he says, sever its connection with "Missouri"; under no circumstances should Norwegian students be exposed to the secessionistic influences, which, he was quite certain from Prof. Larsen's silence, were present at the St. Louis school.[53]

Inflamed by this and other appeals to passion, the delegates came to the Synod meeting at Luther Valley, Wisconsin, June 26 to July 3, 1861, in a mood to do everything for their own "university" but nothing for an institution down south.[54] The meeting opened as usual with the president's report, whereupon Rev. C. L. Clausen and Rev. H. P. Duborg applied for membership in the Synod and were accepted.[55] Prof. Laur. Larsen read a "Missouri"-made paper on *Absolution* which, as we shall see, provoked a discussion that lasted for forty years. Although two major controversies were to center about Prof. Larsen, the president of the "university," still the "university" question became the rallying point—yes, possibly the salvation—of the Norwegian Synod at this time.

Reading the signs of the times, and encouraged by the resolution of 1859 that work be begun on the "university" at once,[56] the "university" committee, consisting of Prof. Larsen, Revs. V. Koren and H. A. Preus, and Messrs. Olsnaes, Myhra, Aadnesen, Aaker, and Aaby, had, through Koren, secured a thirty-two acre tract of land at Decorah, Iowa, for fifteen hundred dollars. In explanation of their action they said that Decorah was surrounded by the Synod's most powerful congregation, materials for buildings could easily be pro-

[52] *Emigranten,* May 4, 1861.

[53] *Ibid.,* June 1, 1861.

[54] By a vote of 47 against, 29 for, and three not voting, they rejected a minority resolution drawn up by the clerical members of the "university" committee that, in case quiet be restored at St. Louis, the students be sent there again.

[55] Report of this important meeting in *K. Maanedstidende,* 1861, 225 ff.

[56] The resolution of 1859 reads: "The Synod will exert itself to erect its own Norwegian university within three years." *(K. Maanedstidende,* 1859, 187.)

cured here, it was centrally located, easily reached, and healthful. The committee recommended that work on the erection of a building be prosecuted with all possible vigor, and that building and subscription committees be named. The committee recommended that Rev. F. A. Schmidt, a "Missouri" pastor at Baltimore, Maryland, be elected as a second professor at the institution, Prof. Larsen being already considered the president of the school. In case the Synod would accept the proffer of the use of the parsonage at Halfway Creek, La Crosse County, Wisconsin, Prof. Larsen offered to give up half of his stipulated salary of one thousand dollars. The committee liked the spirit of this offer, but would not hear of Larsen having less than six hundred dollars, plus house and transportation. Except for a few remarks on the size of the tract purchased at Decorah, this report was accepted without appreciable debate. It was inevitable that this discussion should be interspersed with a discussion of the slavery question, but we shall come to that presently.

At Halfway Creek, La Crosse County, Wisconsin, the "university," appropriately named Luther College, opened its doors on October 14, 1861, with two professors—Larsen and Schmidt—and five students.[57] In 1862 the institution was moved to Decorah, where students and faculty were housed in what is now the St. Cloud Hotel, until buildings could be erected on the college site. Harassed by internal church strife and a political upheaval beggaring description, the brave pioneers—in 1861 seventeen pastors and sixty-nine congregations—carried to a successful close a work that tested their faith at every turn. In times of war, when men were fighting, prices soaring, and markets badly unbalanced, people were called upon to sacrifice as never before. Fired by an unbounded enthusiasm for this religious and cultural ideal—*their* "university"—the Norwegians, who in Norway had been accustomed to sit idly by while the State carried on church projects like this, now came forward and did much more than ever was expected of them. Wheat offerings were accepted at first when money could not otherwise be procured; later cattle offerings, hog offerings, food offerings—almost any kind of offering that had any money value—were taken. People literally took of their own bread—which in the troublous times was none too plentiful for any of them—and gave it for Luther College. Every stone in the "Old Main" was hallowed by the prayers and sacrifices of some one; crystallized in its wood and stone were the hopes and aspirations of these sturdy men and women. Luther College can therefore very properly be called the cathedral of the Norwegians, not only because its "Old Main" is unmatched in its stately beauty, but because it represented, as nothing before or since, the common rallying point of nearly all the Norwegian Lutherans in America. Christian education had finally become a *popular* cause, just as

[57] Of the very extensive literature on Luther College, I shall mention only G. Bothne, *Det Norske Luther College*, 1897, and *Luther College Through Sixty Years*, by Luther College Faculty, 1922.

missions had become a popular cause twenty or thirty-five years earlier.

In 1865 two of the proposed three sections of the building were completed. The center section was fifty-two feet long and the north section was forty-four feet; the south section, when completed, would likewise be forty-four feet long. With its three main stories, a full attic story, and a basement, the building, now known as the "Old Main," was indeed imposing. Instead of an estimated cost of twenty-eight thousand dollars, the rise in the cost of materials and other causes brought the total cost of the building up to seventy-five thousand dollars, which, added to twelve thousand dollars in expenses otherwise, made a large sum to raise. Sixty thousand of this had been raised by the time of dedication, which took place October 14, 1865.[58] This event brought out a vast crowd of six thousand people —in ox wagon, afoot, by boat, by rail—from great distances, in days when travel was slow and the total Norwegian population was not very great. With joy and exultation they came, and the orators of the day broke into rhapsodies: "At last—yes, at last! Is what we see real or is it only a phantom which will disappear when the lights have been burnt down? No, it is real. How could that for which we toiled and prayed so many years be only a vision? No, it is real, it is the fruit of the best there is in us. Thanks be to God forever!" [59]

Students were already finding their way to what is now a venerable seat of learning among the Norwegians. In 1863-64 there were forty-nine students, in 1864-65, fifty-eight; in 1868 the first class of eight was graduated—among them Hans Gerhard Stub, D.D., Litt. D., L.L.D., professor of theology for forty-five years, president of the Norwegian Synod for six years (1911-17), and president of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America for eight years (1917-25). In 1863, L. Siewers was called as the third professor at Luther College, and, in 1865, Rev. Nils Brandt became the fourth professor. Up to 1925 this school had furnished the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America with 575 pastors.

Although the Synod had preferred to build a college of its own, its theological students were sent to St. Louis until it could build its own theological seminary.[60] The first fruit of the connection with "Missouri" was the ordination in 1862 of O. J. Hjort, who had received some of his theological training at St. Louis. The first class

[58] J. A. Ottesen, *Kort Uddrag af Den Norske Synodes Historie* (1893), 24-25.

[59] Quoted by W. Sihler in *Luther College Through Sixty Years*, 22.

[60] E. Ellefsen in *Emigranten*, December 21, 1861, asks if the Synod had not decided to sever its connections with "Missouri" immediately; why, then, does Larsen continue to send students to St. Louis against the expressed wishes of the Synod? Larsen replied that they have not been sent; the college at St. Louis had been moved to Fort Wayne, and the theological department at Fort Wayne had been moved to St. Louis, where henceforth the theological seminary is to be located.

to receive its full theological education there was ordained in 1863. These were: A. Mikkelsen, Th. Johnson, O. J. E. Hagestad and J. Krohn. With the ordination of five candidates and the return of Rev. H. A. Stub in 1865, the Synod had thirty-two pastors, most of whom were present at the dedication of Luther College. The building of Luther College overshadowed the issues raised by its president in 1861, although these issues were very bitterly discussed during all this time.

CHAPTER X

DIVERGENT SYNODICAL ACTIVITIES

IV. Slavery and Schism

As indicated above, the students brought with them from St. Louis the impression that the "Missouri" faculty—the leader of which was the mighty Walther—was secessionistic and pro-slavery. Little dreaming what far-reaching results it would have, the editor of *Emigranten* very respectfully asked Prof. Larsen to give authentic information on this point. The Norwegians, he contended, had a right to know what sort of views the teachers of their future pastors held on the very vital question of obedience to constituted authority.[1] When Prof. Larsen did not answer, another writer "X" ("H")[2] asserted that Larsen's silence was an admission that the St. Louis faculty was guilty of the disloyalty with which they were charged. The South, "X" ("H") asserted, justified itself by two main arguments:

1. Slavery is not sin.
2. To oppose the execution of the laws of the United States in the Slave States is not sin.

In arguments drawn partly from the spirit of the Scriptures, partly from reason, and largely from the philosophy of the day, the writer demolished to his absolute satisfaction both propositions, and, moreover, denounced roundly anyone who could hold such views.[3]

Absorbed as he was in his arduous studies and educational duties, Prof. Larsen was rather annoyed that a newspaper editor and another demagogue, as he was inclined to regard "X" ("H"), should involve him in such secular issues as these. Although it really was "nobody's business" what the personal views of the St. Louis professors were on political questions, he would, for the benefit of tender consciences, answer "X" ("H") anyway.[4]

In reply to the question whether or not slavery is sin, he said that it is not sin.

> Of the many passages which prove that slavery is not sin, I can in a hurry select only a few from a large number. In Gen. xvii. 12 one sees that Abraham bought slaves; these God shows grace by receiving them into His covenant through circumcision. This is

[1] *Emigranten,* May 4, 1861.
[2] The "X" was made into a tell-tale "H" by the typesetter.
[3] *Emigranten,* June 1, 1861.
[4] *Ibid.,* June 15, 1861.

confirmed by Ex. xii. 43-45. In Ex. xx. 17 we find the Tenth Commandment, in which it is forbidden to covet our neighbor's man-servant and maid-servant. That male and female slaves are hereby meant is proved by the fact that this word, which in our Bible is translated as *slave, man-servant* and *maid-servant,* but which in the original text is the same, is used in Gal. iii. 28 and other places as the opposite of free. Where a hired servant is meant, another word is used, as for instance, in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. In Ex. xxi. 1 ff. are found other precepts regarding the slave's position, which the reader himself can look up, and in verse 32 a slave's value is placed at thirty pieces of silver. In Lev. xxv. 44 ff. the purchase of slaves who are to serve in the temple is sanctioned. Although the slavery which the apostles found among the heathen Romans and Greeks to whom they proclaimed the Gospel was far more inhuman than the old Jewish and the present American systems, nevertheless we find in the New Testament the strongest admonitions to the slaves regarding their duty to obey and honor their masters "as Christ," yea, "consider them worthy of every honor," while the slave owners never are commanded to set them free, but only to treat them mildly (cf. I Cor. vii. 20-23; Eph. vi. 5-9; Col. iii. 22, iv. 1; I Tim. vi. 1-10; Tit. ii. 9-15; I Pet. ii. 18-25). Neither time nor space permits me to explain these passages more in detail, but the observant Bible student will himself understand them. Let him read with especial care I Tim. vi. and throughout let him bear in mind that it is an undisputed fact that the words *servant* and *man-servant* are the same as *slave* and *bond-servant.*

In regard to one's duty to obey the government, Prof. Larsen agreed that every soul should be subject unto the higher powers (Rom. xiii. 1) in everything that is not contrary to God's Word. But a subject in a seceded state might not so readily know which government to obey, the federal or the state. As for himself, Prof. Larsen said that if the governor of Wisconsin commanded him to take up arms against the South, he would do so. Whether or not a state has the right to secede, he did not know, as he was not a legal expert, nor was he sufficiently acquainted with his new Fatherland's constitution, laws, and history to render an opinion in this matter. As the Synod undoubtedly expected of him, he had put all his time and strength into the exercise of his calling as a professor. For the good of such agitators as "X" ("H"), Prof. Larsen gave a resumé of an article in *Der Lutheraner* by the venerable Rev. Th. J. Brohm, in which the Christian's relations to politics are summed up under ten heads.

Prof. Larsen's answers were by no means satisfactory at a time when regiments were being formed and sabers were rattling. The editor of *Emigranten* replied [5] that Larsen's discussion of whether or not slavery is sin was irrelevant, as this was no longer a question for discussion, nor was the Republican party—to which practically all Norwegians at that time belonged—founded on the proposition that slavery as an abstract idea is sin. More to the point in the editor's

[5] *Idem.*

mind was Larsen's reply that all rebellion against constituted authority is sin, but he and the Concordia professors speak so vaguely about "constituted authority" that they practically exonerate the secessionists against whom the North was taking up arms for the preservation of the Union. The editor sarcastically begged the professor's pardon for being unable to share his broad objective views of the matter. Although Larsen failed to stamp secession as sin, this caused only a temporary flurry, as in compensation he made statements that were decidedly patriotic.[6]

Not so with the slavery question, however. On this point there were no extenuating statements to offset the irritating effect of his bald statement that "slavery is not sin." Since it was felt that the young[7] Norwegian professor had imbibed these views at St. Louis, it was unavoidable that the question should come up at the Synod meeting in 1861 in connection with the "university" project. In the course of the discussion of this point, Prof. Larsen was again called upon to show from the Scriptures that "slavery is not sin." Basing his remarks on I Tim. vi. 1, 2, he showed that the Scriptures regard the institution as a social organism under which the duties of both master and slave are prescribed. Christianity made slave and master brethren, hence each should respect the other. It did not follow, however, that the master was compelled to free his slave in order to remain a Christian. If slavery be sin, then why did not the Bible demand its abolition, rather than give rules governing the principals —master and slave—of the institution? In the Old Testament, slavery was even commanded (Ex. xxi. 1-7). The commands that a Hebrew slave be freed every seventh year do not apply to present-day slavery, as these statutes pertained to the external polity of the Jews.[8]

Delegate Erik Ellefsen from Big Canoe, also known as "the king of Big Canoe,"[9] contradicted Prof. Larsen, saying that I Tim. vi. 1, 2 did admonish slaves to be patient, but that nevertheless, it was the master's duty to free the slaves. Personal liberty was not only the highest good, but it was a right that no man can take from another. Not only that, but it was every man's duty to preserve this liberty for others also, hence a Christian master must liberate his slave.[10]

[6] The church council admitted—seven years later, however,— that Prof. Larsen had made an unhappy display of modesty in regard to his knowledge of his country's constitution, laws, and history, as his statements were regarded as being evasive by the excited masses, who were inclined to be a little cocksure. See Church Council of the Synod, *Historisk Fremstilling af den Strid, som i Aarene 1861 til 1868 indenfor den norske Synode i Amerika har været fört i Anledning af Skriftens Läre om Slaveri*, 5.

[7] Larsen was only twenty-seven and a half years old at this time.

[8] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1861, 238.

[9] Anderson, *Autobiography*, 72. The point in the title is that he is a local "king" of a district or *bygd* who ruled at home and tolerated no outside interference.

[10] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1861, 259.

From the other side, it was remarked that freedom was the highest temporal good, but one can and must do without it if God so decrees. We have no rights by nature; "we brought nothing into this world," "and having food and raiment let us therewith be content" (I Tim. vi. 7, 8). By nature we are slaves to sin, and as punishment we deserve every distress and misery in time and eternity. Consequently we can demand nothing as a *right,* but we must thank God for what He gives. The status into which God placed us is His good and gracious gift to us; if, in His wisdom, He placed us in a humble, wretched position, He, by His loving kindness, intended to bring us into Christian freedom in faith by becoming the freedmen of Jesus Christ, hence God's bond-servants. For this purpose, it makes no difference whether we, in our external status, are free or slave, rich or poor, of high or low estate. "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it" (your estate as a *doulos,* or bond-servant, does not determine your Christian life); "but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather" (I Cor. vii. 20, 21). Freedom, like money, is a good, which, if God gives it us, well; if not, well. Neither in I Tim. vi nor any other place does the Bible teach that a Christian must free his slaves. Not even the Golden Rule requires this; else must the employer divide his substance with the employee, the rich with the poor. This rule does not make our neighbor our equal, but we should put ourselves into his place and station in life and do to him as we should expect he would do to us in case we were in his place. Even though slavery is not sin in itself, nevertheless it is conceded that it is an evil in itself, from which many fearful sins and abominations easily spring, and actually do spring. It is absolutely sin in itself for a master to sell a slave away from his wife, as this is to put asunder what God hath joined together. Slavery is a result of sin, but not a sin in itself.

Several of the pastors excused the laymen for not being able to grasp this at once. Others desired to consider slavery as it exists in real life, but to this it was replied that this was a historical or political question which required knowledge of the laws governing these things in each state. But the specific abuses connected with slavery could be judged by the Ten Commandments. The Letter to Philemon, insofar as it can be interpreted, does not prove that Paul wanted Philemon to free Onesimus.

Rev. J. Fjeld felt that slavery in itself is sin, even though it was permitted by Paul and the apostles. Rev. B. J. Muus did not think it was sin in itself to keep slaves, but Christianity would lead to its abolition. Others spoke in the same tenor. Rev. C. L. Clausen declared "that slavery according to God's Word is not sin in itself, but it is equally clear from God's Word, that it is one of the very greatest of temporal ills, which every Christian in love must desire to have abolished." Erik Ellefsen still maintained that slavery was sin, and could not conceive of any other point of view. I. Ingebritsen could

likewise not feel satisfied on this point, but felt that slavery must be sin.

Although the discussion between Prof. Larsen and the contributors to *Emigranten* had involved slavery in its most general terms, under which American slavery was also included, we notice that the discussion had now been elevated from the dangerous plane of red-hot human passion to the cooler atmosphere of slavery *in itself*. Concrete slavery was a "historical or political question" requiring much knowledge to discuss it in all its ramifications. Of course, this "objective and ideal slavery" was not the kind of slavery that the laymen were interested in; what they wanted to know was where Prof. Larsen and the pastors stood on concrete, American slavery as it exists, here and now. To them, this other was an idle discussion in which the professors and pastors might take pleasure, but it would never bring them anywhere. Whether or not it was true, as the pastors maintained, that the question of concrete slavery was undebatable because too complex and broad, the objective view did have the added advantage that it removed the question from the dangerous ground on which Prof. Larsen had begun the discussion.

Some pronouncement was expected, seeing the delegates were quite restive on account of what they had heard—or thought they had heard. Rev. J. A. Ottesen and Rev. H. A. Preus made representations to their fellow-pastors that nothing short of a unanimous declaration by the pastors would relieve the tension.[11] Serious differences of opinion appeared among the pastors as soon as an attempt was made to formulate their views. In order to satisfy Larsen, on the one hand, and Clausen, on the other, the statement could neither be too specific nor too general. That slavery *in itself* was not sin, both Clausen and Larsen at this time acknowledged, and, in order to make no mistake on that point, the committee that drafted the resolutions put the pivotal words *in itself* into both the positive and negative statements, thereby making the document appear self-contradictory.[12] The pastors, in their united strength, came before the convention and presented a resolution, which, because it was signed by all the pastors, has been called *The Pastors' Resolution*. It reads as follows:

> Although, according to God's Word, it is not in and by itself sin to own slaves, yet slavery in itself is an evil and a punishment from God, and we condemn all the abuses and sins which are connected with it, just as we, when our official duties demand it, and when Christian love and wisdom require it, will work for its abolition.[13]

[11] C. L. Clausen, *Gjenmäle,* 14 ff., describes these scenes behind the curtains. The full title of Clausen's book is: *Gjenmäle mod Kirkeraadet for den Norske Synode i Anledning af dets Skrift kaldet "Historisk Fremstilling,"* etc. (Chicago, 1869.)

[12] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1861, 261, and Clausen, *Gjenmäle,* 17.

[13] *Ibid.,* 1861, 261.

It soon appeared, however, that the lay members were not sufficiently impressed by this document to give it a substantial majority. Twenty-eight voted for the resolution, ten against, and twenty-eight refused to vote—a disquieting vote indeed. The laymen had read in their newspapers that slavery is sin, and Erik Ellefsen, for one, openly declared that the pastors were trying to "pull the wool over the eyes" of the lay members.[14] In their turn the lay members introduced a counter resolution, in which slavery was branded as sin:

> Slavery considered as an institution can only exist by definite law, and since the laws on which it is based are in direct conflict with God's Word and Christian love, it is sin; and since slavery in the United States has been one of this country's greatest evils both for Church and State, we regard it to be our duty by legal means as Christians and good citizens to do everything in our power to alleviate, diminish, and, if possible, abolish slavery, when our country's best interests and Christian love demand this of us.[15]

Two questions are answered in these declarations:[16] 1. Is slavery in itself sin? 2. Is it to be regarded as desirable, as good? To the first, the pastors answer that it is not sin, the laymen that it is; to the second, both pastors and laymen give a negative answer, although the laymen make no distinction between *sin* and *evil;* slavery should, to their mind, be alleviated and abolished because it was *sin*. Both resolutions call for the abolition of slavery when their respective duties as pastors or as citizens demand it. If the practical question had been uppermost in the minds of the lay members—and of Clausen who soon joined them—there would have been no need for further discussion as there was no clash on the practical point of abolition.

But "the king of Big Canoe" had blood in his eye and wanted to try his strength against the pastors. Both the Augustanans and Eielsen's church were definitely committed to abolition, and in this they had the sympathy of the Norwegians in general, who centuries ago abolished it from their domains.[17] To the Norwegians, then, who had an inherited aversion to slavery and were, withal, plain-spoken folk, the distinction between slavery as a sin and slavery as an evil seemed trifling and irrelevant, even though the pastors hastened to add that it ought to be abolished. Some also thought that this was an ill-concealed attempt to defend American slavery.[18] Others, again, though loyal to the Synod, were beginning to feel that the pastors

[14] *Emigranten,* December 14, 1861. Ellefsen used the expression "stikke blaar i öinene paa lägmändene."

[15] Text in *K. Maanedstidende,* 1861, 262.

[16] *Emigranten,* 1862. Koren, "Gjenmäle" in *Samlede Skrifter,* III, 33.

[17] Norwegians refused to settle in Missouri because it was a slave state. Ole Rynning, as early as 1837, denounced slavery as infamous. ("True Account," in *Minnesota History Bulletin,* November, 1917, 257.)

[18] C. L. Clausen, *op. cit.,* 19.

were attempting to exert pressure as an office-holding aristocracy in America, seeing practically every one of them had belonged to the office-holding, or "conditioned," class in Norway.[19] All that was lacking was a leader of the people who could marshal all these forces in a concerted drive against the pastors, who were admittedly at a popular disadvantage.

Such a leader was Rev. C. L. Clausen. Although ordained, he had never been able to regard himself as being fully on a par with the more aristocratic Christiania university men.[20] These men reorganized the Norwegian Synod in 1853 over Clausen's head, whereupon Clausen seems for the time being to have lost interest in that body. He had resigned from his congregation at Luther Valley in 1851, chiefly because his health was poor. But he carried on several independent projects. He took several mission trips into eastern Minnesota, headed a colonization project at St. Ansgar, Iowa, and served as pastor for a call extending over a stretch two hundred miles long and fifty miles wide in southern Minnesota and northern Iowa. During this time he also sought public office, being elected for one term to the Iowa legislature in 1856, and serving as commissioner of immigration for six years. All this activity no doubt made the Synod pastors question the sincerity of his plea of bad health as a cause for his retirement from the ministry in the Norwegian Synod, especially since he was doing a great deal of pastoral work in an independent, extra-synodical way. At any rate, when he applied for readmission to the Synod in 1861, the Synod pastors forced him to make a very abject confession "that he had sinned in that a few years earlier he had resigned from the pastorate." He also had to make other confessions on points of doctrine before he could be readmitted to the Synod,[21] all of which no doubt rankled in his breast.

In a time when sharp distinctions were drawn even among Norwegians on American soil, between the office-holding clergy and the laity, Clausen's sympathies invariably gravitated toward "the people." Torn between his respect for the Synod leaders and his broad sympathies for the common man—which made him a man of the people—Clausen became a vacillating and at times an almost pathetic figure.

> This peculiarity of his character [i. e., his responsiveness to popular will] and his relationship to the lay people explains the vacillating position he took in the course of this struggle. When his fellow-pastors took him amongst themselves and step by step advanced the arguments on their side, he yielded inch by inch, went over to their way of thinking, took his pen and subscribed to their common *Reso-*

[19] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.*, 5.

[20] S. Strand, "Pastor C. L. Clausen," in *Symra*, 1913, 215. For the class distinctions and its bearing on the education of those outside the "conditioned" classes, see Chapter IX.

[21] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1861, 234; also above, 145.

lution; but when he came home he regretted what he had done, and sent the papers the information that he withdrew his signature.[22]

That was exactly what Clausen did. When he came home from Luther Valley and had had time to think the matter over—and to consult with his members—he began to feel that Erik Ellefsen was probably right and the Synod pastors wrong.[23] After a renewed study of the question, he prepared a statement retracting the declaration he had made at Luther Valley together with the other pastors. Sensing the situation, and wishing to keep the dissension among the clergy from becoming public property, the Synod pastors took the question up at the pastoral conference at Decorah early in November, 1861. Introducing the topic of slavery, Rev. J. A. Ottesen made statements which so exasperated Clausen that he not only was confirmed in his intention to retract his declaration at Luther Valley, but also made other statements about liberty and the source of governmental authority that he had to retract in 1864.[24] Ottesen undoubtedly won this debate, as he had won many another, but he failed altogether in winning Clausen over to his way of thinking. Before the end of the month Clausen sent to *Emigranten* a statement of his *Retraction.* In this he defines slavery as "a person using other persons as his property under the compulsion of the law, and the status of these is called slavery, which, as before stated, is declared to be an evil in itself." He goes on to define an evil. "An evil," he says, "is a condition like poverty, or sickness. . . . Since slavery is an evil, it is sin to keep men in it, as this is contrary to the law of nature and of love. Therefore, it is sin to own slaves." Clausen goes on to brand *The Pastors' Resolution* as mere sophistry and idle chatter.[25]

In reply, Rev. A. C. Preus defined what was meant by sin *in itself.* "Sin in itself," he says, "is such an act as is absolutely sinful whenever, wherever, and however it is performed." All such acts are so clearly branded as sin in the Bible that all dispute and uncertainty regarding them are impossible. They consist either of doing what God has forbidden, or omitting to do what he has commanded. Slavery does not fall into this category, although we admit, he says, that slavery often, possibly at most times, is sin, because it takes place in unbelief and godlessness. But it is then sin, not because it is sin in itself, but because it is carried on in unbelief and godlessness. On the other hand, slavery is an *evil,* a punishment from God as a consequence of sin, just as all evils are the consequences of sin and a punishment from God. Ignorance, poverty, sickness, death, war are evils and the consequences of sin, but not

[22] Characterization by his son-in-law, Prof. Svein Strand, in article, "Pastor C. L. Clausen," in *Symra,* 1913, 216.
[23] C. L. Clausen, *op. cit.,* 20.
[24] *Ibid.,* 21, and Church Council, *op. cit.,* 21.
[25] Clausen's *Retraction* is found in *Emigranten,* November 30, 1861.

sin in themselves. Treating the subject patriotically, he said that the Constitution of the United States protected slavery; if slavery be sin, then every citizen of the United States has taken an oath to serve sin, as he has sworn to uphold the Constitution. If Clausen denounces this as sophistry, he does not know the history of slavery, nor the fact that the Christian Church did not for seventeen hundred years denounce slavery as sin. Rev. C. L. Clausen's doctrine is a modern doctrine hatched in the nest of rationalism, which, again, is the offspring of freethinking.[26] Our *Resolution* is not pro-slavery, but anti-slavery.[27]

Once this question had come up for public debate, there was no end to the number of contributions from all quarters. None of the Synod pastors joined Clausen, but he was ably assisted by Erik Ellefsen, William Winslow, and other laymen who were interested in the fight for various reasons. In *Kirkelig Maanedstidende,* the editors, Rev. H. A. Preus and Rev. J. A. Ottesen, kept up a sharp fire for a time, asserting their views with a great show of authority. Much more damaging to Clausen in view of the temper of the people was Rev. V. Koren's *Gjenmäle,* which was a genteel but very strong rebuttal of Clausen's *Retraction.*[28] Rev. B. J. Muus was incisive but sympathetic; hence, when it came to a personal conference with Clausen, Clausen welcomed Muus and Duborg as the conferees. Quite early in the struggle the question was referred by the Synod leaders to the theological faculty at Christiania, but when the faculty did not agree with the Synod on all points, Profs. Larsen and F. A. Schmidt of Decorah entered into a controversy with the Christiania faculty. From all sides—except from "Missouri"—the Synod pastors were attacked, even rank outsiders, who had heard that the pastors were "disloyal," taking a menacing attitude at times.[29] But through it all, the other Synod pastors not only held their ground, but little by little the distinction between slavery as a *sin* and slavery as an *evil* gained ground among the people. In proportion as this took place, the opposition weakened, and the public discussions died down for several years.

But if the public discussion lagged, private discussions in conferences and otherwise did not. Efforts were made to prevent a discussion of the subject in the conventions of the Synod until after the Civil War, when men should have regained their composure. In an attempt to force public discussion, Clausen insisted on having a resolution put into the minutes at the Synod meeting at Holden, Goodhue County, Minnesota, in 1862. Clausen seems to have been clear on only one point, and that was that he did not agree with the pastors. For when he began to formulate his resolution, which pur-

[26] The "freethinkers" were particularly odious to the Norwegians at that time.

[27] A. C. Preus's reply is found in *Emigranten,* December 14, 1861.

[28] Reprinted from *Emigranten* in Koren, *Samlede Skrifter,* III, 5-44.

[29] R. B. Anderson, *op. cit.,* 79.

ported to be in opposition to *The Pastors' Resolution,* the other Synod pastors protested that they agreed absolutely with the resolution as he had formulated it; if Clausen intended to give the impression that the other pastors held views opposite to those stated in his resolution, he grossly misrepresented their views, they said. In order to make the difference plain to all, Clausen was prevailed upon to add that *slavery is sinful,* whereupon his resolution was recorded by the secretary. We shall underscore the words that were added at the insistent demands of the other pastors in order to enable the reader to distinguish between the ideas that Clausen actually thought he held, and those the other pastors thought he must hold if he radically differed from them. The resolution reads:

> Whereas, the ownership of slaves is nowhere in the New Testament expressly permitted, much less commanded, but on the contrary, since it militates against the spirit and essence of Christianity as well as against natural rights and fairness to keep other human beings as slaves (except as punishment for crime) *and consequently is sin;* and
>
> Whereas, experience also shows that slavery usually occasions and is connected with all sorts of open and vile sins;
>
> Therefore, it is the duty of Christian citizens wherever slavery exists, by the use of Christian and legal means, to work for its alleviation, restriction, and abolition.[80]

Clausen's efforts to force a public discussion in the convention of the Synod met with little success at this time. Obviously if the question were taken up at the Synod conventions, Ellefsen and other lay friends would help Clausen to swing the lay delegates into his column, and thus outvote the pastors. Clausen, however, complains that "the pastors, in the meantime, were not ready to have the matter discussed at the Synod meetings, but were able adroitly to manage it so that, after they had spoken sufficiently on the subject to work up the lay delegates, they took a vote, and, of course, it was voted not to discuss the matter." [81] Although Clausen was permitted to place his resolution in the minutes, and although some discussion ensued as to the wording of this resolution, the broad question of slavery was left undiscussed "until the doctrine itself could be taken up for discussion."[82]

Another blow to Clausen's cause was the resignation at the Holden meeting, in 1862, of Rev. A. C. Preus as president of the Norwegian Synod. In his place was elected Rev. H. A. Preus, who, together with Rev. J. A. Ottesen, was destined to deal sternly with Clausen.

But if the discussion of the slavery question was assiduously

[80] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1862, 239.

[81] C. L. Clausen, *op. cit.,* 57. This observation can easily be extended to all the meetings of the Synod, as his tactics invariably met with the same countermove.

[82] Church Council, *op. cit.,* 42.

kept out of the public meetings of the Synod, "it was to be discussed so much more at the [private] pastoral conferences; for there," Clausen observes, "they had me alone, and they could also call in such assistants as Profs. Walther, Sihler, and Craemer." [33] In these conferences, where, as he would have us believe, the opposition kept the minutes, and, withal, kept an eagle eye on every statement, Clausen was made to cut a sorry figure. At the conference in Decorah in 1861 he said that "liberty was not one of the things over which the government and parents have the power of dispensation," and "whatever rights these have, they are given them for the good of the subjects, and if those in authority used these rights to the detriment of the governed, they could not expect to be obeyed as rulers; they had then violated their trust and exceeded the rights given them." Clausen claims that he never made these statements.[34] The other pastors stoutly maintained that all authority is of God and that all rebellion is sin, and admonished Clausen to retract the statements attributed to him for his own conscience's sake.[35] But Clausen resented what he called the other pastors' "pressure upon his conscience." It was soon after this conference that he issued his *Retraction* of *The Pastors' Resolution* at Luther Valley.

For two years, Clausen absented himself from the pastoral conferences, partly because he was an army chaplain for a year, and partly because he wished to keep out of the clutches of the pastors. When he did appear at the conference at Decorah in 1864, he was forced to retract the statements regarding the authority and function of government. That same year, another pastoral conference was held at Perry, Wisconsin, at which Clausen introduced the subject of slavery.[36] After describing the patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Roman systems of slavery, he took up the attitude of the New Testament to slavery. The Greek word *doulos* means *slave,* or *bond-servant* only when placed in juxtaposition to *free-man.* The New Testament doctrine of spiritual equality is made to apply equally to social and political equality. Many sessions were held, and finally, at Clausen's request, Revs. B. J. Muus and H. P. Duborg were appointed a subcommittee to confer with Clausen. The conferees agreed upon the following theses:

1. Agreed: That if the civil law leaves unpunished various exercises of a slave owner's rights (which are punished by divine law), slavery is not therefore a sin in itself.

2. In I Tim. vi. 1 by servants under the yoke is understood *slaves* or *bond-servants.*

3. In I. Tim. vi. 1 is taught: (a) that slaves can remain in the condition of servitude without sin; (b) that masters could have the

[33] C. L. Clausen, *op. cit.,* 57. This, too, has general application.
[34] *Op. cit.,* 28.
[35] Church Council, *op. cit.,* 21, and Clausen, *op. cit.,* 28.
[36] Reported by Church Council, *op. cit.,* 2 ff., and Clausen, *op. cit.,* 56.

right to own slaves without sin; (c) that slaves are in duty bound to render the service of a bond-servant, and that masters have the right without sinning thereby to demand this service from their slaves.

This is taught clearly and unambiguously in I Tim. vi. 2. In Eph. vi. nothing is clearly and unambiguously taught that conflicts with I Tim. vi. 1, 2; nor in I Cor. vii. Rev. C. L. Clausen knew of no other passage that taught any thing clearly and unambiguously in conflict with the doctrine which they here agreed to find in I Tim. vi. 1, 2."[37]

Again Clausen had agreed with the Synod pastors; again, when he came home, he changed his mind. Rev. H. A. Preus, who was elected president of the Synod in 1862, wished to have *visitas* or episcopal inspection in Clausen's congregations, and, at the same time, confer with him privately, but Clausen avoided this conference. By appointment, Rev. B. J. Muus came to St. Ansgar to confer with Clausen, but Clausen was just ready to board the train for Dubuque, Iowa, so the conference was canceled. At the conference at Paint Creek in 1864, where Clausen had failed to show up, it was decided that H. A. Preus and Ottesen should call on Clausen at St. Ansgar. This they did. Several days were consumed in negotiations, in the course of which Ottesen and Preus lost patience with Clausen, especially when he would not admit his own statement at Perry, Wisconsin. By a series of stern admonitions Clausen's resistance was worn down to the point that "by reasons and proofs as well as by the earnest and loving admonitions of the two brethren" he finally was brought to confess that he not only had taught false doctrines, but he had been guilty of what was worse, namely, of evasion. This he promised to confess to his congregation the following day; but try as hard as he would, Ottesen could not formulate a confession that suited Clausen. The next day Clausen said he would make no confession to his congregation.[38] In his *Gjenmäle,* Clausen says that these conferences annoyed him greatly and that the pastors continually "pressed" him to accept arguments that were contrary to his convictions on the point. Ottesen and Preus were evidently not the men to win Clausen. Every visit made matters worse, until Clausen's congregations at Silver Lake and Lime Creek resigned from the Synod in 1865. They forthwith changed their decision, however, and called as their pastor Rev. T. A. Torgerson, a student from St. Louis, who later became president of the Iowa District of the Norwegian Synod.

During all this time, the Synod leaders were carrying on a spirited controversy on the same question with the theological faculty at Christiania (now Oslo). Clausen was denied any comfort from this, however, as not a rumble of this conflict was heard until 1866, when all the *Acts* were published.

[37] Text in Church Council, *op. cit.,* 26.
[38] Church Council, *op. cit.,* 27, 28.

The facts in the case are these: In 1861 the Synod leaders had asked the opinion of the faculty at Christiania in regard to *The Pastors' Resolution* regarding slavery. The faculty replied in 1863. As their reply did not suit the Synod men, who claimed it was contradictory, and also because they wished to defer discussion until after the Civil War was over, nothing was said about the faculty's findings in the matter. In the meantime, Rev. H. A. Preus, on behalf of the church council, wrote the faculty requesting that they take the matter up for renewed consideration. In order to demonstrate to the faculty that their views were "contradictory and at all events partly unbiblical," Rev. H. A. Preus asked the faculty at Decorah—Larsen and Schmidt—to write a *Refutation* (Imödegaaelse), which he forwarded together with his request. No reply to this was received until after the Synod meeting in 1864. Preus placed the matter before the pastoral conference in 1864, and before the church council in 1865. In 1866 all *Acts in the Slavery Question* were laid before the Norwegian Synod which, in turn, ordered them printed.[39]

As indicated, the faculty's *Opinion* of *The Pastors' Resolution* was given in 1863, in a somewhat long article.

> If slavery [they said] consists according to its concept in this that one human being regards and treats another as his property, that is, not as a person, but as a thing, not as an independent moral subject, but as a purely passive, selfless and lawless, impersonal object, then it is first of all evident that slavery as such is contrary to God's original will with and toward man. Since "God made man in his own image" and "made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts xvii. 26), he has thereby also originally placed them in a relationship of essential equality to each other as independent moral persons.

The unity of the human family from the original pair makes men equal moral beings who have mutual moral influence upon each other. Brotherly love, which is one man's fundamental duty over against another, presupposes necessarily that the one recognize the other as a fellow-human, his equal in everything that makes a man a man. To consider another human, or be considered by another human, as a mere thing, as an impersonal, dependent, lawless object, as is the case in slavery, where the master influences the slave but is not in turn influenced by the slave, must, therefore, be contrary to God's will at creation and His original world-economy. Since this moral relationship does not exist in slavery, it is not a divine institution, but solely a fruit of a will contrary to God's, a will that entered the world through sin. According to the history of the world, slavery really belongs only among those who have turned away from God and have been left by God to their own devices. Considering

[39] Found in *Report of the Third Extraordinary Synod Meeting Held at Gjerpen, Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, June 20-28, 1866*, 40.

God's will at creation, on the one hand, and man's sin, on the other, slavery's relation to Christianity is plain; Christianity must perforce seek the abolition of slavery, which has its origin in sin and is against God's will. History also testifies that one of the fruits of Christianity is the abolition of slavery. In the place of the bond-servant, Christianity has placed the serving brother.

Then the faculty took up the question from a scriptural standpoint:

> Just as the Scripture does not declare it to be sin to be a slave or that it is the duty of the slave to break his chains, so it does not make it an unqualified sin to own slaves or say that the master is in duty bound to liberate his slaves. On the contrary, the Scripture places the institution of slavery—together with the social relations instituted by God Himself between man and wife, parents and children—under the Fourth Commandment [40] (Eph. vi. 5-9 cf. v. 21—vi. 4; Col. iii. 22-iv. 1 cf. iii. 18-21). Presupposing that there were within the Christian congregations both Christian slaves and Christian masters, the Scriptures admonish the former to regard their earthly lords, whether believers or unbelievers, as the representatives of the heavenly Lord, and serve them as such with reverence, submissiveness, and faithfulness (Eph. vi. 5-8; Col. iii. 22-25; I Tim. vi. 1, 2; Tit. ii. 9, 10; I Pet. ii. 18). Paul admonishes a Christian slave not to worry over, or be dissatisfied with, his status as a slave, as though that should in any way affect his Christian power and glory, but rather regard the spiritual freedom in Christ higher than the yoke of external servitude.

Then toward the end of the *Opinion* the faculty again reasoned itself into the opinion that *slavery is sin!*

In his respectful, but straightforward, reply,[41] Rev. H. A. Preus, president of the Synod, said that they had requested an opinion based on God's Word. This *Opinion* not only was not based on God's Word, but it was even contrary to God's Word. In order to give the faculty an opportunity for reconsideration, the *Opinion* was returned with a *Refutation* (Imödegaaelse) by Prof. Laur. Larsen and Prof. F. A. Schmidt.[42] In a keenly analytical fashion, the Decorah professors take up for discussion the various points of the *Opinion,* and, of course, find it wanting in several fundamental aspects. The faculty says that the institution of slavery spoken of in the Bible is permissible, hence not sin, and then adds that this type of slavery is not slavery. What right has the faculty to state that the Bible does not mean slavery when it specifically speaks of slavery? If one accept the faculty's assertion on this point, he naturally must conclude with the faculty that it is only this non-existent slavery that is not sin. Further, setting aside the clear state-

[40] The Reformed call this the Fifth Commandment.

[41] *Report,* 1866, 57.

[42] "Imödegaaelse af Fakultetets Betänkning ved Professorerne i Decorah," by Laur. Larsen and F. A. Schmidt, in *Report,* 1866, 45.

ments of Scripture, because these do not agree with the faculty's conception of slavery, the faculty must seek arguments to prove that *slavery is sin* in the original will of God at creation. Conceding that poverty, humble circumstances, inequality, and slavery—the greatest of human evils—do not belong to God's original will at creation, we cannot, nevertheless, declare that these are incompatible with Christianity and must be abolished by it. If the faculty contends that Christianity must make equal the high and low, the rich and poor, master and servant, government and subject, then its doctrines will lead directly into communism. One can be a Christian in any of these estates, hence Christianity cannot be said to be incompatible with slavery, which is one of them. Finally, there are plain contradictions in the document. On the one hand it is stated that slavery is sin in itself, and, on the other, that it is not sin under every circumstance to own slaves. If slavery be sin, the master sins in owning slaves, the slave sins in being in servitude.

Continuing their *Refutation*,[43] Prof. Larsen and Prof. Schmidt argue that the faculty's definition of slavery is altogether faulty and extreme, robbing the slave of his personality and his moral existence. Jurisdiction over a slave extends only to his temporal, physical part, so that he by his physical and mental faculties performs what belongs to man's earthly calling. But the essentially spiritual, heavenly side of a man's person or soul in the ultimate sense of the word, no man can own, and of that no man can have jurisdiction. Only God, who has redeemed this nobler part of man, can rule over this higher self, wherefore He strictly forbids men in I Cor. vii. 23 to be "the servants of men." This higher self makes a man an independent, moral being, a *person*, and over this no man, only God alone, can rule; consequently the slave possesses those most highly praised boons, human rights. That moral influences are not mutual between master and slave is a mere assumption, based on the false premise that a slave is robbed of his moral, personal existence. Granting it does not exist, the master can still not degrade a slave from being a *person* created in God's image to a mere thing, as the slave under even the most abject conditions retains his higher spiritual ego, his moral personality. Only if the master had jurisdiction over the slave's higher soul, so that he reduced him to a mere machine, could he destroy his personality. In that case slavery would be spiritual, hence in the sphere of the invisible. The faculty likewise says slavery is sin in itself, but that there are times when slavery is not sin. The faculty's definition is therefore false and impossible.

In opposition to this definition the professors placed Philip Melanchthon's definition, and on the basis of that they again stated the biblical doctrine of slavery. The faculty confused physical slavery with spiritual slavery. Christianity does abolish spiritual servitude, it said, but even this will not be completely realized until

[43] For text see *Report*, 1866, 45.

the Last Day. Certainly, before God and in a spiritual way, there is no difference between bond and free, male and female, and yet, who shall say that the man as man and the woman as woman do not have their respective Christian duties? If physical slavery is abolished by this passage (Gal. iii. 28), physical freedom is likewise abolished, as it says "there is neither bond nor free."

The Christiania faculty did not deign to take any cognizance of this spirited show of Norwegian American learning. In a short note it coldly informed Rev. H. A. Preus that it saw no reason why it should either retract or change any part of its *Opinion*.[44]

Incensed that the faculty should refuse to take the theologians of the young American church seriously, the church council made reply that the Synod president had appealed to the faculty, little expecting the faculty to disagree with *The Pastors' Resolution,* since God's plain Word is the same in Norway as in America.[45] It was the experience of the young American Lutheran body that violent partisanship blinds the eye and makes the heart bitter where political expediency runs counter to biblical truth. The contention that slavery is absolutely sinful is merely a single paragraph in the present-day anti-Christian program. Most intimately connected with this is the question of the absolute necessity of temporal freedom, which, again, is only one among the several "natural and inalienable human rights; liberty, property, security, and resistance against all oppression." In the same category are the distinctions between absolute and relative goods, between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world; whether government is of God, whether the Fourth (Lutheran enumeration) Commandment is valid, whether God's Word has absolute authority and sufficiency—in short, the question of slavery is only one step toward ultimate and absolute carnal emancipation, when government shall be overthrown and man shall rule in God's stead in a carnal millennium. To have published the faculty's *Opinion* would have meant utter confusion, as our opponents would in triumph have pointed to the part in which a conclusion is drawn from faulty premises as favorable to themselves; we could, with equal right, point to the scriptural exposition as being favorable to us. We hardly expected a Christian faculty to treat a grave matter like this with the cold hauteur with which it replied to the Synod president. We shall still give the faculty a chance to correct the abysmal error of the first part, as this neutralizes and contradicts the scriptural proofs adduced in the second part.

The Christiania faculty naturally ignored this passionate outburst, and the Synod leaders let the matter rest until the war was over and men had regained their composure. Finally, in 1866, as the Synod leaders no longer deemed it necessary to withhold the information that they had, they laid all the documents or *Acts* in the case before the Synod convention, which thereupon ordered them printed.

If the Synod men had been disappointed with the faculty's

[44] *Report,* 1866, 60. [45] *Ibid.,* 1866, 61.

Opinion, Rev. C. L. Clausen was extremely well pleased with it. Larsen—Clausen attributed it to him—had again overstepped the bounds and introduced the question of the right of ownership of slaves. Here was Clausen's chance, and he took advantage of it. In a number of vehement articles in *Emigranten* in 1866, he attacked the pastors as well as their views. His arguments are summed up in the thesis that one man cannot *own* another, nor has one man the right to *sell* another.[46] But even this, the pastors said, was refuted by Scriptures because Isaac "had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds, and great store of servants" (Gen. xxvi. 14). The technical point as to what belonged to a definition of slavery was also taken up, Clausen stoutly maintaining that the definition counterpoised by Larsen and Schmidt against the faculty's "faulty" definition was no definition at all. The questions of property rights of slaves and of the definition of slavery were discussed at a meeting in Christiania in 1867, between Clausen and H. A. Preus, with Prof. Gisle Johnson as intermediary. Here Prof. Johnson sided with both, consequently no settlement was effected.

Then came the meeting at Chicago in 1868. In a number of preparatory conferences

> so much progress had been made, that both parts agreed that the condition of forced servitude in the New Testament was not sinful, and that this both in and outside of Scriptures is called slavery. Rev. C. L. Clausen, however, would not concede that this word is used in its precise meaning, and claimed that slavery in itself was heathen slavery and therefore sinful. Since, in the meantime, some degree of unity seemed to have been attained, the Synod decided to continue the discussion of the subject with the result already gained as the starting point, in the hope that the struggle thereby might be brought to a successful close. This hope was only partially fulfilled. The majority of the Synod agreed not only to the points that Clausen had conceded [that is, eight of the ten theses], but also to the point that what Scriptures call a *slave* is a real slave, and that we have no right to say that this word in Scripture is not used in its simple, precise, and straightforward meaning. On Clausen, however, this great unanimity of the Synod made such an impression, that he withdrew from the Synod.[47]

Clausen's impression of the "progress" that had been made at these conferences was that the pastors had conceded several points, but that no record was kept of these, while his concessions were carefully tabulated.[48] Under the impression that the pastors were conceding that slavery was not a divine institution, that it was not enforced by the Fourth Commandment, that a slave could not be inherited or sold, he conceded that the condition of servitude could be both severe and forced and yet be in accord with the command

[46] C. L. Clausen, *op. cit.,* 70 ff.
[47] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1868, 221.
[48] Clausen, *op. cit.,* 80 ff., and in Church Council, *op. cit.,* 50.

to love one's neighbor as one's self. The servitude acknowledged by the apostles was, of course, not sinful in itself. Clausen claims that he stretched himself to the limit and accepted the first eight of the Chicago theses of 1868, but balked at the ninth and tenth as being a device on the part of the other pastors to worm their way out of the concessions they had made. These latter theses, the other pastors admitted, contained the doctrine of slavery as a divine institution protected by God's Law, and giving the owner the right of inheritance and sale of slaves. The fateful Chicago theses follow:

1. The forced servitude mentioned in the New Testament (Col. iii. 22 ff., iv. 1; Tit. ii. 9; Eph. vi. 5-9; I Tim. vi. 2) is not in and by itself sinful.
2. In this condition of forced servitude the master had the right to demand of the [bond] servant that he use his abilities and energies according to his master's will in all the things in which he by his obedience does not deny God the obedience which he owes Him (Tit. ii. 9; Eph. vi. 5 ff.; Col. iii. 22 cf. Acts v. 29).
3. This condition of servitude is called *forced* on account of the right which belongs to the master according to thesis two, and the duty devolving upon the servant, and especially because the servant has no right to demand the abolition of his servitude and to procure his own freedom.
4. Even if it can be supposed that the bond-servant voluntarily entered, or voluntarily remains in, this servitude, and even if he can be freed, even then this servitude is called *forced* servitude.
5. This condition of servitude is, and is called, *forced,* even though the bond-servant obeys gladly and willingly, and not merely because he must (Eph. vi. 6 ff.).
6. In this condition of forced servitude the servant has no right to demand any other wages than that which belongs to his daily bread.
7. In this forced servitude the master is obliged to show his servant love and every justice and fairness, according to God's Word in Matt. vii. 12 and Col. iv. 1.
8. Since this forced servitude is a civil institution, the right and duty mentioned in theses two to six are civil rights and duties. But the Christian master, just because he wishes to follow the commandment of love and the admonition to fairness, will not always insist on his strict rights, but often in his conscience feel in duty bound to relinquish them.
9. The condition of forced servitude described above is by the usage of language in and outside of the holy Scriptures designated by the words *master* and *bond-servant* (or *slave*).
10. The condition of bondage spoken of in the New Testament is an actual servitude, or an actual slavery.[49]

As indicated above, Clausen subscribed to the first eight. To the subscription to the ninth he added the reservation that *slave* in the

[49] Text most conveniently found in Church Council, *op. cit.*, 48.

New Testament is not used in a literal sense; to the tenth he would not subscribe. He introduced resolutions setting forth his own ideas, but these were rejected by a vote of ninety-nine to twelve, with seven not voting. Very much grieved, he left the meeting. Although it was nearly midnight Saturday when the vote was taken, the Synod decided to have a committee go through Clausen's resolutions and point out what was right and what was wrong in them.[50] On Sunday afternoon, an extra session was called at which these "false elements" were eliminated, and Clausen's resolutions in expurgated form were accepted. Clausen, who had already handed in his resignation, was not reconciled by this act; he remained firm in the conviction that, for the present at least, coöperation between himself and the Synod pastors was out of the question. Rather than expose himself to pressure at every contact with the pastors, and rather than be forced to admit arguments and doctrines which he with good conscience could not acknowledge, he now took his leave of the Synod. The resignation is dated June 28, 1868.[51] With Clausen went his own and a few other congregations, among them the Big Canoe congregation near Locust, Iowa, in which Erik Ellefsen was the dominant power.

Thus was the dead issue of slavery "settled." Larsen, the man of God, who, like a prophet, looked neither to right nor left, had been zealous—possibly to indiscretion—for what he considered to be the only true conception of the scriptural doctrine of slavery. Clausen, the man of the people, who, like a spokesman of humanity, looked chiefly to the right and left, had been zealous—possibly to unscripturalness—for what he considered to be the only true conception of the American doctrine of human liberty. Both sides erred in that they showed too little inclination toward being reconciled.

It is interesting to note Clausen's attitude toward the Synod men as he leaves. For the lovable and conciliatory ex-president of the Synod, Rev. A. C. Preus, Clausen retained the kindliest of feelings.[52] Nor were all the Synod pastors to blame, but

> there is, and there has been for a number of years among the Synod pastors, a clique of four or five, with the president, Rev. H. A. Preus, in the lead, who really directed all things both in the Synod meetings and in the conferences. What these agreed to set forth and put through, it had seldom been of any use for the other pastors or the lay people to oppose; for between the members of the clique or conclave there is not only great ability and talent, but a striking unanimity, as if their ideas had been molded in the same form. While there are among the other pastors also very able and gifted men, there is no internal unity, and they lack above all the energy and tenacity which is characteristic of the clique and assures it of victory sooner or later—for the time being.[53]

[50] Text of resolutions in Church Council, *op. cit.*, 49.
[51] Text in Church Council, *op. cit.*, 50.
[52] Clausen, *op. cit.*, 69.
[53] *Ibid.*, 85.

It is a question, of course, whether the presence of a clique in the Synod warranted Clausen's breaking the unity of the church; on the other hand, a governing clique could not fail to exasperate anyone who possessed a high-strung democratic spirit and a slight amount of personal ambition.

During this time, controversies were also carried on by the Synod leaders in other quarters. Prof. Larsen, in 1861, had declared that the Church of Norway was no longer "what it had been." Rev. H. A. Preus, for nearly ten years, had carried on in *Kirkelig Maanedstidende* a controversy with *Norsk Kirketidende* (Norwegian Church Times) on the questions of lay activity, Chiliasm, the relation of the Word to the Sacraments, and the so-called *open questions*. Repeatedly Preus charged that the Church of Norway had little regard for pure doctrine. In the slavery controversy, the Synod leaders openly charged the Christiania faculty with placing reason above the Scriptures. They were evidently drifting apart, the American church charging that the Mother Church was "changing," whereas, possibly, the truth is that the Norwegian American church had learned from "Missouri" to take a definite stand for Lutheran principles, and thus was inclined to deem the Mother Church rather unstable.

In other ways it was becoming increasingly evident that Norwegian American Lutheranism was drifting away from the Church of Norway. From the very beginning the pastors in Norway, with very few exceptions, had denounced emigration, and in every way tried to prevent it. When the lower classes had emigrated in spite of this, only a handful of pastors came over to serve these wilful children of the State Church. When Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson returned to the Mother Church, and entered a plea for these people who were, in spite of all, the true children of the Church, he met with very little response, though certain individuals, such as Tollef Bakke, had always been generous toward the Norwegian Americans. When Prof. Laur. Larsen returned, he not only found little readiness on the part of the Mother Church to help, but he found ill-concealed opposition in many quarters. Through it all, however, the Synod men had to admit that they had had some staunch friends in Norway. The noble Gisle Johnson had sent them some of the best theological students he had, and continued to do so even after the seeming break over the slavery question. It was Gisle Johnson who had arranged to have *studiosus theologiæ* Fr. Wilhelm Bugge apply for the theological stipendium of the Synod with a view to making him a theological professor in that body. Here, again, the general distrust of the Norwegian Church became apparent in the Synod's stipulation that Bugge spend a year of study "at an orthodox institution in America," which, of course, was at St. Louis.[54] The promising young man resented this aspersion, as he took it, upon his Mother Church, and chose to stay in Norway. Thus was lost

[54] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1861, 263.

to the Synod this most brilliant student, who became one of Norway's outstanding bishops and foremost theological professors.

Among the laity, the wall of nationalism was rising between the Norwegian Americans and the Norwegians. Many of the emigrated Norwegians from the lower classes, who had acquired some wealth and a great deal of bravado, returned to Norway and made a disgusting show of both. Especially did they delight in flaunting their new-found power in the face of their former oppressors, the office-holding class. Little wonder, then, that the people in Norway either envied or despised the Norwegian Americans; certainly they refused to treat these "exiles from home," both high and low, with the respect that the Norwegian Americans at every turn demanded.

Through it all, the Synod was making great headway. Luther College had been built, and great gains were made in lay and pastoral membership. Manifestly, the Norwegian immigrant, whether lay or cleric, preferred the aristocratic Synod leadership to the somewhat poiseless leadership in Eielsen's and the Augustana Synods. Indeed, several Augustana pastors joined the Synod during these years of strife. Though the Synod lost Rev. C. L. Clausen, it had gained other pastors besides being unified in doctrine and practice as never before. But the Synod lost an able man whose influence with the common man, and whose strategic location in northern Iowa and southern Minnesota, cast long shadows ahead.

CHAPTER XI

DIVERGENT SYNODICAL ACTIVITIES

V. SUNDAY—ABSOLUTION—AUGUSTANA—CONFERENCE.

ANOTHER controversy in which Clausen was destined to take an active part for a time was the controversy in regard to the Sunday question. Not only did Clausen oppose the Synod leaders very strenuously from 1861 to 1868 in regard to their stand on slavery, but during this same time (1862 to 1868) he also opposed them on their doctrine in regard to Sunday. This difference must be noted, however: At the meeting of 1868 he acknowledged that the other pastors were right in regard to the Sunday question, but at that very same meeting he found their doctrine in regard to slavery so erroneous that he had to quit their company.

The possibilities for mischief were hardly less in connection with the Sunday question than in connection with the slavery question. Slavery touched Norwegian American patriotism, which was not yet highly developed; moreover, the question was not discussed publicly until after the Civil War and then in such an abstruse, academic fashion as to leave American slavery almost altogether out of account. But the Sunday question touched a deep-seated conception which had been nourished for centuries in a country where Adventists were unknown. From the days of orthodoxy the Norwegians had acquired a genuine respect for that which is holy, and this had been further developed in the days of pietism. During the period of pietism the Norwegians had become devout readers of devotional literature, but though they read the Bible, they neglected almost altogether the *Augsburg Confession.* Pontoppidan's *"Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed"* (Truth unto Godliness), however, had attained to a position of unchallenged authority. Since this *Explanation* contained a very brief statement that the Christians had chosen Sunday instead of the Jewish sabbath because Christ arose from the dead on that day, the Seventh Day Adventists made use of this as a starting point in their arguments with the Norwegians when the latter came to America.[1]

As early as 1855, Rev. A. C. Preus found it necessary to explain through *Kirkelig Maanedstidende* why "the Christian Church has the first day of the week as sabbath instead of the seventh."[2] This was occasioned by the work of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day

[1] Johs. Ylvisaker in H. Halvorsen, *Festskrift,* 236 ff.
[2] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1855, 92.

Adventists in his congregations at Koshkonong. As other pastors were similarly troubled by the Seventh Day Aventists, the Synod pastors made a reprint of Luther's *Large Catechism* and distributed it in great numbers. Even this failed to convince many, for Luther's doctrine was so different from anything that they had yet heard, that some believed that it had either been falsified on this point, or else that Luther was wrong.[3]

A mere glance at Luthers' *Large Catechism* will make it clear why they felt this way. Luther says in the *Large Catechism:* "Now, in the Old Testament, God separated the seventh day, and appointed it for rest, and commanded that it should be regarded holy above all others. According to this external observance, this commandment was given to the Jews alone, that they should abstain from toilsome work, and rest, so that both man and beast might recuperate, and might not be debilitated by unremitting labor." [4] The Pharisees interpreted this too strictly and continually demanded that Christ live up to their sabbath commands,

> just as though this commandment were fulfilled in this, viz., that no external [manual] work whatever be performed, which was not the meaning, but, as we shall hear, that they sanctify the sabbath as a Day of Rest. This commandment, therefore, according to its gross sense, does not pertain to us Christians; for it is altogether an external matter, like the other ordinances of the Old Testament, which were bound to particular customs, persons, times, and places, and of which we have now been made free through Christ.

We need the sabbath, however, for rest and for a set day for worship. But the latter "is not limited to any one time, as with the Jews, that it must be just on this or that day"; for all days are holy and equal before God. We make Sunday especially holy for ourselves by devoting it to the hearing of God's Word; "yet that the observance of rest be not so strictly interpreted as to forbid any other incidental and necessary work." Not in resting do we sanctify the sabbath, but in hearing the Word of God and in doing holy deeds. God will require an account of us as to how we hear God's Word; especially are those fastidious spirits to be reproved who become tired of the Word of God when they have heard it once or twice. The Word, then, makes the sabbath, not the day, nor abstention from work.

Article XXVIII of the *Augsburg Confession* [5] condemns the bishops who wish to put Christians again under the bondage of law (Acts xv. 10; Col. ii. 16, 20, 23), because the Bible condemns these commands as "Jewish fables" (Tit. i. 14) and "doctrines of devils" (I Tim. iv. 1ff). Paul, therefore, admonishes them to abide in their Christian liberty and no more be entangled in the yoke of bondage

[3] *K. Maanedstidende,* 1862, 288.
[4] H. E. Jacobs, *People's Edition of the Book of Concord,* 401.
[5] *Ibid.,* 65.

(Gal. v. 1). "Those who judge that, by the authority of the Church, the observance of the Lord's Day instead of the sabbath day was ordained as a thing necessary do greatly err. Scripture has abrogated the sabbath day."

The doctrine of Christian liberty found in Luther's *Large Catechism* and the *Augsburg Confession* was vastly different from the popular conceptions of the sabbath introduced into Norway, especially that which came through pietistic channels. The Synod leaders were again at a popular disadvantage, with Rev. C. L. Clausen taking the popular side of the question.

But the ever-vigilant leaders were ready to set the people right on this point. In an article in *Kirkelig Maanedstidende*,[6] in 1862, the editor, Rev. J. A. Ottesen, discussed in thirteen theses the Lutheran doctrine of Sunday. These theses were taken up for renewed discussion at the meeting of the Synod at Holden, Goodhue County, Minnesota, June 12-20, 1862.[7] Since other pressing matters prevented a full discussion of the subject, an informal vote was taken and the discussion was deferred until a later time.[8]

At the Rock River (Wisconsin) meeting, June 10-17, 1863, the Sunday question was again taken up. Rev. C. L. Clausen did not agree with the first thesis (see below) in which "sabbath" was taken as referring to no special day. Clausen thought that Sunday had a divine validity, inasmuch as he felt that other passages besides the Third Commandment (Lutheran enumeration) enjoined its observance. When questioned further regarding these passages, he quoted Acts. xx. 7; I Cor. xvi. 2; and Rev. i. 10. The Lord, moreover, signally honored the day by rising from the dead on that day, wherefore the Christians also hold it in honor. To this it was replied that, though Sunday was observed, it was not as a result of law. Since the ceremonial and civil laws of the Old Testament are abrogated, only the moral law remains. But the moral law does not contain a principle which must be applied to one day but not to the other six. Although Paul preached at Troas on Sunday (Acts xx. 7), this proves nothing as to our obligation to keep Sunday; the sabbatarians could argue with equal show of right that we should keep Saturday, since Christ preached in the synagogue on Saturday. The commandment "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy" (Ex. xx. 8) referred only to the Jews as is seen by the preface to the Commandments: "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Ex. xx. 2).[9]

[6] For March 15 and April 1, 1862.

[7] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1862, 228.

[8] *Ibid.*, 1862, 238.

[9] The sabbath is expressly called a "shadow" in Col. ii. 16, 17. In the New Testament (II Cor. III. 7-11) it is expressly stated that the "ministrations of death, written and engraven in stones," are "done away," and in order to retain the moral law, the commandments are all repeated—except the third—in the New Testament.

We need not trace further these discussions, which at times became extremely warm; indeed, at one time Clausen threatened to leave the meeting on account of certain personal references.[10] He remained to the end, however, but refused to vote for the theses as they were finally formulated. These read:

1. When in the Third Commandment it is said: "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy," the word "sabbath day" does not have for us Christians any reference to a certain day such as it had for the Jews (cf. Col. ii. 16; Rom. xiv. 5, 6; Gal. iv. 9, 10).
2. On the contrary, for us Christians, the "sabbath day" in the Third Commandment means every day of our whole life, which shall be for us a spiritual day of rest in Christ.
3. This spiritual day of rest, which consequently is the Christian's whole life, we should, according to the Third Commandment, hallow, and this is done by a diligent and correct use of God's Word. This is the moral element in the Third Commandment, which is binding for all time.
4. That which in the present time should oblige us Christians to keep Sunday is therefore: (a) The order and established custom of the Christian Church, which we should observe for the sake of peace and love (Phil. iv. 8, 9; Rom. xiv. 13; and I Cor. xiv. 33); (b) the command of our government concerning this day, which we should obey for God's sake according to the Fourth Commandment (Lutheran enumeration) and I Pet. ii. 13.
5. Consequently we sin by unnecessary work on Sunday (a) against the Fourth Commandment, when we disobey the command of the government; (b) against the Third Commandment, insofar as we thereby neglect or despise God's Word; (c) against love, when we without valid reason break the order and established custom of the Church and give offense.[11]

These five theses contain the gist of Rev. J. A. Ottesen's thirteen theses of 1862. In 1868 Rev. C. L. Clausen retracted his statements that the Third Commandment has a divine command back of it.

Others took up the cudgel, as, for instance, Prof. A. Weenaas of the Scandinavian Augustana Synod (later of the Conference) and Prof. Sven Oftedal of the Conference. Since this second stage of the controversy, which became inter-synodical rather than domestic, goes far beyond our present limits, we may merely remark that these new antagonists were very ably answered by more than half a dozen men of the Norwegian Synod, such as B. J. Muus, P. A. Rasmussen, V. Koren, J. A. Ottesen, J. B. Frick, H. A. Preus, and others. It is somewhat of a questionable compliment to the Synod that its own man—Clausen—furnished the opposition with their most telling arguments.

When Prof. Laur. Larsen came to the meeting of the Norwegian Synod at Rock Prairie, Wisconsin, June 26 to July 2, 1861, possibly he had some apprehensions that the question of slavery would be raised, though he wished to avoid a discussion of that subject if it

[10] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1863, 274. [11] *Ibid.*, 1863, 260, 276, 277, 281.

were at all possible. On another question, Absolution, he felt entirely different, for this he had been asked to introduce. This question, indeed, was to provoke much more discussion than slavery ever did, for it was destined to be debated for over forty years, until it was finally settled in 1906.

In introducing the subject, Prof. Larsen stated that he could do nothing better than to present the report from the "Missouri" Synod meeting of October, 1860. Rev. Th. J. Brohm, the author of the "Missouri" articles on Absolution, divided his subject into eight theses, each of which was supported by copious quotations from the recognized fathers of the Lutheran Church and by occasional passages of Scripture. The theses themselves are probably as concise and short a presentation of the question involved as we can find.

1. Absolution, or the forgiveness of sins, is, according to Luther's teachings, the Gospel, whether proclaimed to many or few.

2. Private Absolution is consequently not a power outside, or by the side of, the Gospel to forgive sins; it is nothing else than the preaching of the Gospel to the individual sinner.

3. The guardians and givers of Absolution in the public ministry are the preachers of the Gospel. Otherwise it is the function of all Christians, as the whole Church originally was the keeper of the keys; but the one who by the services of these forgives sins is the Triune God.

4. Absolution consists: (a) not in this that the confessor (the pastor) sits as a judge, and returns a verdict concerning the inner condition of the confessant; (b) nor in an empty pronouncement or wish that the sinner be forgiven; but (c) in a powerful impartation of the forgiveness of sins.

5. The effect of Absolution (a) is not contingent upon man's repentance, confession, and atonement, (b) but Absolution demands faith, creates and strengthens faith; (c) without faith it does not profit a man in the least, (d) although it is not therefore a *clavis errans* (a failing key).

6. In private Absolution, no essentially different, or better, forgiveness is given than in the preaching of the Gospel. Further, it need not necessarily be thus administered in order to get the forgiveness of sins, as though no forgiveness of sins takes place without Absolution. Still it has its own peculiar worth and usefulness, because by it the individual is made more certain that he also has the forgiveness of sins.

7. In close connection with private Absolution stands private confession, which latter is nothing else than a request for Absolution. It has moreover also this advantage, that it gives the confessor (the pastor) opportunity to examine people, to apply the Word of God and the *Catechism,* to guard against the unworthy use of the sacraments, and to give all sorts of advice in difficult questions of conscience. Finally, it is a training in self-humiliation. Summa: it is an application of the Law and the Gospel.

8. Confession is not commanded by God, but is, nevertheless, of the greatest usefulness. Consequently this should not be forced upon anyone as a necessary act, but where it exists, it ought to be main-

tained; where it has fallen into disuse, it ought to be revived by recommending it and praising its usefulness.[22]

In support of these theses, Prof. Larsen brought out the idea that the impartation of the forgiveness of sins on God's part was not contingent upon anything human, which always is uncertain and faltering, but wholly upon God's work and Word. Two things, he said, are necessary for our salvation: 1. The forgiveness of sins must be procured for us—which Christ indeed has done. 2. God must in virtue of Christ's merit forgive us our sins, or specifically state that He is reconciled. This He has done by raising Christ from the dead (He was "raised again for our justification"), and by preaching the forgiveness of sins to all creation. In God's heart, the sins of the whole world are already forgiven; but this does not help us until we become aware of the fact and believe it; wherefore we need the Word through which this grace is proclaimed to us. The Gospel is therefore nothing but a declaration of the forgiveness of sins, i.e. an Absolution. God says in Absolution to the sinner, "I am now reconciled and no longer angry; I therefore proclaim to you the forgiveness of all your sins." In case the sinner believes this, he has the forgiveness of sins. Private Absolution, as well as the Sacraments, can give nothing greater and better than the preaching of the Gospel, and at every administration of the Means of Grace Absolution takes place. God who reconciled the world to Himself (II Cor. v. 19) is no longer our enemy, but sends ambassadors to say "be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. v. 20). In the general provisions to forgive sins (Mark x. 15; John xx. 25; Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18), the private application of the Gospel is also involved. This is more specifically seen from John xx. 23; Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18; and Mark xvi. 15, where the contents of the Gospel are described as being the forgiveness of sins. The power to forgive sins is not given to a priestly order, but to the whole Church, which, however, exercises it through certain called persons. Absolution is powerful in the case of the unconverted as well as in the case of the converted, as Absolution is the bestowal of a gift which is prepared by God in Christ.

The Means of Grace contain the treasury of grace, hence the declaration of the forgiveness of sins is not a mere empty sound, but an actual impartation of forgiveness. The Reformed and false Lutherans erroneously consider the Gospel as a mere story which has moral power to change the heart, whence faith arises; this faith, they think, is a glorious deed for the sake of which God forgives the sinner. Faith, on the contrary, is merely an empty hand, which lets itself be filled by God. It is an erroneous conception that once a man has the forgiveness of sins in Baptism and the Word, every subsequent preaching of the Gospel is merely a reminder of the once-given grace; preaching is actually a new impartation of grace of the

[22] Text in *K. Maanedstidende*, 1861, 236.

same quality and kind as that originally bestowed on the sinner. Faith is neither a dead nor fixed thing but a vital organism which constantly craves more grace. Consequently, the Gospel cannot be preached too often, nor can Absolution be given too often.

The only condition for Absolution is Christ's perfect satisfaction; by our own attempts to provide satisfaction through our works outside of Christ, we only arouse God's wrath. The pastor must, therefore, preach repentance, but must not demand it in such a way that people base their hope of forgiveness on it. Yet the Law must be preached so severely that it works contrition and drives the sinner to seek forgiveness. When Absolution demands faith, this demand comes not from the Law, but from the Gospel. If I see a rich man hold out his hand to offer me a gift, it is necessary that I, in case I shall receive the gift, also stretch forth my empty hand and accept it. As it is really the sight of the rich man's hand that gives me courage to reach forth my hand, so it is the sight of God's mercy which arouses our love and confidence so we believe.

Private confession is nowhere commanded in Scripture, not even in James v. 16. Aside from being a necessary prerequisite to private Absolution, it also gives the pastor an excellent opportunity to fulfil his duty as watchman and shepherd of his flock. So much for Larsen's elaboration of the theses.

Rev. B. J. Muus had been appointed to lead the discussion of Prof. Larsen's paper.[13] He found nothing in the first three theses to comment upon; in the fourth he had his doubts concerning the word *impartation*. This should be corrected to read: "God *gives* and presents the forgiveness of sins in the Gospel or Absolution to all who hear the Word, and while indeed all in that sense receive it, nevertheless only the believers retain it." By *impartation* is understood that a thing is given and received, consequently it is hereby implied that God gives the forgiveness of sins also to unbelievers, who, of course, cannot receive it. In reply, it was brought out that from God's side Absolution and the forgiveness of sins were actually given to both believers and unbelievers, to penitent and impenitent, to Judas as well as to Peter and Paul, in short, unconditionally to all who hear it. But, of course, the impenitent reject and despise this gift, inasmuch as they will not believe God when He offers the forgiveness of sins. Still these are given the forgiveness, as the Word cannot fail nor can the keys fail (i.e. they are not *claves errantes*). A pardoned prisoner might despise the pardon, and remain in jail, not because he is not pardoned, but because he despises the pardon. So it is with the sinner who refuses to believe. The pardon is there whether he accepts or rejects it, though, of course, only he is benefited who accepts in faith. But faith is not a condition, else a person would have to have faith in his own faith; that is, he must believe he believes, and his belief creates the thing he

[13] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1861, 244.

believes. This is absurd. He must not center his faith on anything in himself but in the Word and promises of God.

Rev. B. J. Muus declared himself in full accord with all that had been said. Muus, however, had been unfortunate in the use of certain terms as: the pastor should "try the condition of the heart as far as is humanly possible." Objections were raised to this, and, when Muus protested that he meant exactly the same as the pastors were saying, they replied that it was not a question of what he *meant* or *thought,* but of what he had *said.* In theology, he was told, it all depended on the words he used, as Scripture commands the teachers to use the correct *form* of doctrine (II Tim. i. 13) and "all speak the same thing" (I Cor. i. 10). Muus regarded this as a nervous solicitude for the truth and refused to recant when the other Synod pastors very emphatically called upon him to do so. In what seems to be sheer perversity he again attacked the expression *powerful impartation* and, with two others, refused to vote for the theses until the words should be stricken. At the adjournment of the meeting both sides agreed that this question needed further discussion.[14]

Nothing more was done about Muus, as he probably meant exactly what he said when he stated that he fully agreed with the Synod pastors. This is borne out by the fact that he defended the Synod doctrine by word of mouth and in writing.[15] Possibly he merely wanted to make it plain that he would not yield to compulsion or threats. On their side, the other pastors soon had their hands full with Rev. C. L. Clausen and the slavery question. It was not good policy, therefore, to stir up any trouble with Muus, who was an able theologian and a keen dialectician. In any event, Absolution was not destined to become a domestic issue, as was the case with slavery.

But there were external foes who were ready to make the most of Muus's arguments. The Scandinavian Augustanans immediately took up Muus's arguments and elaborated upon them. Finally the Synod leaders invited the Scandinavian Augustanans to a conference, which was held at Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin, 1864. The theses read by Prof. Larsen in 1861 were made the basis of the discussion, and it developed that the following articles especially became bones of contention:

> 1. Absolution, or the forgiveness of sins, is, according to Luther's teaching, the Gospel, whether proclaimed to many or few.
>
> 4. (b) Absolution [does not consist] in an empty pronouncement or wish that the sinner be forgiven, but (c) in a powerful impartation of the forgiveness of sins.
>
> 5. (b) Absolution demands faith, creates and strengthens faith; (c) without faith it does not profit a man in the least, (d) although it is not therefore a *clavis errans* (a failing key).[16]

[14] *Ibid.,* 1861, 253.

[15] E.g. in an article in *Emigranten,* February 11, 1867.

[16] V. Koren, "Et venligt Ord i en vigtig Strid," in *Emigranten,* March 11, 1867. Reprinted in *Samlede Skrifter,* III, 45.

Just as Rev. B. J. Muus had formerly objected, so now the Scandinavian Augustanans objected strenuously to the doctrine that Absolution or the Gospel is a *powerful impartation* of the forgiveness of sins. The Augustanans maintained that the Gospel imparts the forgiveness of sins to believers, but not to unbelievers. The Synod pastors insisted that the Gospel is and remains the same, whether received or rejected by men, and that it is therefore a *powerful impartation* of the forgiveness of sins to all who hear it, whether they are believers or unbelievers. Here, then, the issue was drawn, and here, as Rev. V. Koren remarked, the parties "stand to this day [1867]." [17]

It was inevitable that the discussion should center itself about the Gospel, as Absolution, according to both sides, is the personal application of the Gospel to the individual, whereas preaching is a general application of the Gospel. Is the Gospel and Absolution one thing when applied to the believer and another when applied to the unbeliever, or is it the same regardless of to whom it is applied? That was the question that was to be discussed for over forty years. The Synod pastors stressed the objective validity of the Gospel; it had in it the forgiveness of sins, and actually offered this to men. The mere fact that some failed to accept this did not do away with its objective reality. This, of course, is the orthodox emphasis on the objective reality of salvation as expressed particularly in the forgiveness of sins through the work of Christ. The Augustanans adopted the more subjective pietistic view and emphasized the fact that the Gospel did not have any saving or forgiving effect in the case of the unbeliever. If it did not have any saving or forgiving effect, they said, why speak of the Gospel as imparting the forgiveness of sins? How was the forgiveness of sins *powerfully imparted* to an unbeliever who, nevertheless, remained unabsolved? Out from this subjective reasoning, they, as the Synod men thought, really approached the idea that each one made his own Gospel—if he believed there was forgiveness in the Gospel; if he did not, there was no forgiveness in it. When in defense of their view the Augustanans quoted the passage: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine," the Synod pastors replied that the mere fact that what was holy was given to dogs, and that pearls were cast before swine, did not in the least affect the intrinsic quality of what was holy or of the pearls—they were holy and pearls regardless of their abuse.[18] If the Gospel and Absolution contained nothing more than what man by faith put into them, then man really had to depend on his faith—he had to have faith in his own faith—and not in the Gospel.

At the end of the colloquy both parties formulated their views on this subject:

[17] "Et venligt Ord," in *Samlede Skrifter*, III, 47.
[18] Johs. Ylvisaker, in Halvorsen, *Festskrift*, 253.

> The Augustanans taught: The Gospel contains, holds forth, and offers the forgiveness of sins to all who hear it, but this forgiveness is given, imparted, and presented only to those who in faith receive it.
>
> The Synod pastors taught: The preaching of the Gospel gives, presents, and imparts the forgiveness of sins to all to whom it is proclaimed, whether they believe or not (although it is not accepted by all).[19]

The chief difference between the contestants seems to have been in the *essence* rather than in the *effect* of Absolution. Both agreed that the Gospel offered the forgiveness of sins, but the one side held that it was given only to those who in faith received it, while the other side said that it was given also to unbelievers, though they did not accept it. Both agreed that unbelievers received no benefit from such an Absolution.

Since the controversy extends far beyond the limits of our paper, we shall merely state that the Synod undertook to go to the bottom of this and related subjects in the so-called "Traktat Nr. 4" (Tract No. 4), in which Absolution is treated especially in theses seven and eight. On the Scandinavian Augustana and later the Conference side Prof. A. Weenaas and others took part. Eielsen's Synod also took a very active part. The question was finally settled in 1906, when committees from the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, Hauge's Synod, and the Norwegian Synod agreed on the following theses in a session at St. Paul, Minnesota, March 27-30, 1906:

> 1. Absolution, which according to God's command and in His name is given those who desire the consolation of the Gospel, is God's own absolving act through the office of the Word.
>
> 2. In Absolution God declares to the sinner the forgiveness of all his sins as a gracious and promised good, which is established and procured by the merit of Christ's blood, and stored up for reception in the Gospel's gracious promises.
>
> 3. The means whereby the sinner receives, appropriates, and becomes partaker of the gift of forgiveness, and, in Absolution as if by God Himself, must be tendered, declared, and presented, is faith.
>
> 4. Absolution is always a genuine and valid Absolution of God, although it does not benefit without faith, and although an impenitent and unbelieving hypocrite does not become a partaker of the gift of the forgiveness of sins which is declared unto him.
>
> 5. When, according to customary church language, it is rightly said that only the penitent should be absolved, it is not thereby said that the administrators of the office of the keys are able to try the hearts and pass judgment on the condition of the confessant's heart, but only that it is their duty conscientiously to exercise care in regard to the confessant's confession in word and life in order not to give that which is holy to the dogs or throw the pearls to the swine (Matt. vii. 6).[20]

[19] J. A. Bergh, *Den norsk lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika*, 174.
[20] *Ibid.*, 436.

Thus it seems that this discussion ended just about where it began. Muus's idea of trying the hearts "as far as this is possible" was rejected; so was the idea that faith created the content of the Gospel. On the other hand, the Synod had already in 1872 decided to drop the words *powerful impartation,* as they were subject to being misconstrued. It thus took forty years to construct a single set of theses that reflected the spirit of Article XXV of the *Augsburg Confession,* which reads:

> And the people are most carefully taught concerning the faith and assurance of Absolution, about which, before this time, there was profound silence. Our people are taught that they should highly prize Absolution, as being the voice of God, and pronounced at His command. The power of the keys is commended, and we show what great consolation it brings to anxious consciences; that God requires faith to believe such Absolution as a voice sounding from Heaven, and that such faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins.[21]

Closely connected with this is the controversy about the "Justification of the World" (Verdens Retfärdiggjörelse), but this falls altogether outside the limits of our present studies. The most serious phase of the whole situation is the fact that these subjective and objective views were bound to clash, once they approached the delicate question of predestination. Here the orthodox wing would begin with God and His plans for our salvation even before the foundation of the world was laid. The subjectivists, or pietists, would begin with faith in the individual and say that those who believe were destined to be saved. Prof. F. A. Schmidt later saw the possibilities of this problem, and Norwegian Lutheranism was sadly rent, only to be reunited along other lines. This also falls outside our present limits, however.

In 1868, when Rev. C. L. Clausen left the Norwegian Synod as a result of the slavery controversy, he was free to join one of two existing Norwegian Lutheran bodies: Eielsen's Synod or the Scandinavian Augustana Synod. The latter was composed of Norwegians and Swedes, who, as we have seen, left the Northern Illinois Synod in 1860.[22] Clausen, however, was in no great hurry about joining either of these bodies, but remained outside of all synodical connections for approximately two years. He was joined by Rev. Botolf Botolfsen Gjeldaker, who came to America in 1870.

But the Scandinavian Augustana Synod underwent changes that greatly affected the status of Clausen and Gjeldaker. On the promise of a salary of one thousand dollars a year and free house, besides a year of study in Germany, the Scandinavian Augustana Synod succeeded in inducing the promising young August Weenaas to come to Paxton to teach at "The Augustana College Seminary."[23] Being a

[21] Jacobs, *op. cit.,* 52. [22] See above, 166.
[23] Hatlestad, *Historiske Meddelelser,* 76. See also above, 191.

Norwegian patriot as well as a schoolman, Weenaas agitated for a separation from the Swedes. At Moline, Illinois, in 1869, the Scandinavian Augustana Synod very magnanimously voted that the Norwegians were at liberty to launch their own school, and arranged for an amicable adjustment of the property rights in "Augustana College Seminary." Their share of the money thus made available, the Norwegians invested in a building at Marshall, Wisconsin, June 29, 1869, whither the Norwegians at Paxton repaired in a body. As it was a very short step from independent school work to independent synodical work, the inevitable separation of the Norwegians from the Swedes took place the next year, 1870.[24]

In the meantime, some differences in the Norwegian section of the Scandinavian Augustana Synod also appeared. Prof. Weenaas evidently wished to put into effect a stipulation written into the title to the Marshall property at its purchase, namely, that "a complete American Academy" be maintained in connection with the school.[25] Prof. Weenaas evidently took this to mean that the academy had to be non-sectarian, at which Rev. O. J. Hatlestad and others balked.[26] To add further to the impatience of Hatlestad and his group, Prof. Weenaas persisted in making overtures to Clausen, who, as a former member of the Norwegian Synod, had certain prejudices against the Augustanans, and insisted on making terms with the Augustanans instead of unconditionally subscribing to their creeds and constitution. Clausen's attitude merely tantalized Weenaas, who was more determined than ever to get Clausen into his camp, and was willing to leave no stone unturned to accomplish this purpose.[27]

After the Norwegians had left the Swedes in 1870, the most natural thing for them to do was to organize themselves into a Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod, just as the Swedes had organized into the Swedish Augustana Synod and which indeed the articles of separation stipulated that they should. But when the Norwegians came together to organize, Weenaas and those who wished to make place for Clausen and B. Gjeldaker in the new organization forestalled action on organization. The meeting contented itself with electing Rev. O. J. Hatlestad president, and Rev. J. Müller Eggen secretary. Although Hatlestad and a committee had prepared a draft for a constitution, discussion of this was blocked, and, instead, the following resolution was passed:

> 1. The Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod hereby declares itself to be organized.
>
> 2. This synod accepts as unchangeable according to their contents the doctrinal articles proposed by the committee on constitution.
>
> 3. It is delegated to a committee in conjunction with Rev. C. L. Clausen to decide on time and place for a conference between the

[24] For acts of division see Hatlestad, *op. cit.*, 64.
[25] See above, 191.
[26] Hatlestad, *op. cit.*, 77.
[27] Koren, *Samlede Skrifter*, II, 129, and Hatlestad, *op. cit.*

synod and Rev. C. L. Clausen and the pastors connected with him; which meeting is to be publicly announced at least four weeks before it is held. Members of this committee are to be the Revs. Weenaas, Hatlestad, and Eggen.

4. To perfect the proposed organization, it is necessary that there be agreement on the following points:

a. That a committee of five be elected to constitute the synod's temporary government and representation.

b. This committee must propose to the conference a Synodical constitution. This committee consists of the Revs. Amon Johnson, Hatlestad, Müller Eggen, and Messrs. H. Strand and G. Gabrielsen.

c. As an inescapable condition for entering this church body it is deemed necessary that both sides agree on the principle that questions of doctrine and conscience are to be settled only according to God's Word and the Confessions of our Church; all other questions, however, where nothing to the contrary is stipulated, are decided by majority vote.

d. Concerning church rites and customs, it is hereby declared that the congregations have full right and freedom to arrange these things as they find it useful and most in accord with propriety and good order.

e. For the sake of unity and order, the synod ought, by majority vote, to agree upon a certain liturgy, which is to be used at the synod's conferences or other meetings.[28]

After voting the Swedes thanks for friendly and loving companionship in years past, the meeting adjourned without taking action in regard to further organization.

A conference was held between the tentatively organized Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod and Rev. C. L. Clausen and Rev. B. Gjeldaker, at St. Ansgar, Iowa, August 10, 1870.[29] At this meeting were the following Augustanans: Prof. A. Weenaas, Revs. O. J. Hatlestad, Johan Olsen, J. C. Jacobson, O. Paulsen, David Lysnes, N. Olsen, J. J. Naessa, Falk Gjertsen, N. Vikre, O. Scheldahl, P. Asbjörnsen, M. P. Ruh, S. M. Krognes, J. Müller Eggen, and the delegates A. Tharaldsen, G. Gullikson, and M. Meland. Absent were Revs. A. Johnson, J. P. Gjertson, T. H. Dahl, T. H. Wald, N. C. Brun, and L. E. Green. The other parties to the conference were Rev. C. L. Clausen and Rev. B. Gjeldaker.

Rev. C. L. Clausen was elected president and Rev. J. Müller Eggen secretary. After a few preliminaries, it was determined that reports be heard of a meeting held in February, 1869, between Clausen and the Norwegian section of the Augustana Synod. This brought up the question of doctrine, which was discussed from Wednesday until Friday, with the final result that both parties recognized each other as brethren in the faith. When the question of a constitution was brought up, Rev. O. J. Hatlestad produced his draft prepared for the Andover meeting. Since Clausen also had pre-

[28] Bergh, *op. cit.*, 205.

[29] These acts are fully reported in J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.*, 204 ff.

pared a constitution, a deadlock ensued, and the matter was referred to a committee consisting of Revs. Hatlestad, Clausen, Olsen, Gjeldaker, and Prof. Weenaas, besides the laymen Rustad, Meland, Syverson, Gullikson, and A. Tharaldsen. After due discussion the committee proposed to the conference that it be organized on the basis of Clausen's constitution, with certain minor changes. They pledged their adherence to the Symbolical Books of the Norwegian and Danish Lutheran Churches, that is: the *Apostolic, Nicene,* and *Athanasian Creeds;* the *Unaltered Augsburg Confession;* and Luther's *Small Catechism.* Hatlestad voted against this doctrinal basis as he wanted the whole *Book of Concord* rather than the *Augsburg Confession.* He hoped to steer the new body into the General Council, for which the ex-Synod man, Clausen, held no particular brief. Ignoring Hatlestad's objections, it was decided to unite on the basis proposed by the committee. At Clausen's suggestion the name of the new organization became *The Conference for the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,* instead of the contemplated *The Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod.* Clausen had acquired an aversion for the latter name as a result of the controversies between the Augustana Synod and the Norwegian Synod, to which he had belonged. The name of the new Synod henceforth was usually given as merely *The Conference.*

These resolutions naturally had to be ratified separately by both parties to the conference before they became binding. Accordingly the tentatively organized Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod had a meeting on August 15 at St. Ansgar in order to make final arrangements for entering the Conference. Rev. O. J. Hatlestad presided, and Rev. J. Müller Eggen functioned as secretary. This convention decided to defer action until the conferences between the synod and Clausen and Gjeldaker were at an end, at which time they would reassemble. In accordance with this resolution, the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod again assembled on the afternoon of August 15. Since Hatlestad inauspiciously failed to appear, Rev. Johan Olsen was elected to preside in his place. At this meeting, a resolution was passed dissolving the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod, in order that its members might enter the proposed Conference. Rev. O. J. Hatlestad had asked to have his protest against this action added to the minutes.

The Conference then reassembled, and completed its organization. Rev. C. L. Clausen was elected president, Rev. Johan Olsen vice president, Rev. J. Müller Eggen secretary, and Rev. O. Paulsen treasurer. On August 17 Prof. Weenaas was elected editor of the Norwegian-Danish organ, *Lutheraneren,* and also president of Augsburg Seminary. His rights to both of the offices were to be disputed later, as we shall see. At its organization the Conference had eighteen pastors, to whom there were soon added seven more, making twenty-five in all. When the St. Ansgar meeting adjourned after completing the organization of the Conference, it seemed as if

the Norwegians had succeeded in launching their new synod without mishap. One might have expected the Conference to take over not only the legacy of the Norwegian group from the Scandinavian Augustana Synod, but also from Clausen's and Gjeldaker's group.

But this early experiment at union was not to succeed quite so well as it at first promised. While the Norwegian-Danish Augustanans, under Weenaas's leadership, had made concessions that had made a union with Clausen and Gjeldaker possible, there were other elements that looked askance at these union efforts. Rev. O. J. Hatlestad had bolted the meeting at St. Ansgar as the last steps were taken to weld the conferring elements into the Conference. Rev. O. Andrewsen and Rev. Andreas A. Scheie had from the very first refused to take part in the St. Ansgar meeting, and, of course, remained outside of the Conference. Since Rev. Paul Anderson, who for years had been very intimately associated with Andrewsen and Hatlestad, was out of the ministry from 1861 to 1876, on account of bad health, he naturally took no part in the deliberations at St. Ansgar; nor was there any urgent reason why he should make known his wishes in the matter. Other men, as the Revs. S. M. Krogness, David Lysnes, and M. P. Ruh, had taken a rather perfunctory part in the formation of the Conference at St. Ansgar, and their perfunctoriness was not changed into enthusiasm for the proposed Conference when Hatlestad, the president of the temporarily organized Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod, left the convention at St. Ansgar in anger and disgust. Quite a price was thus paid for Clausen's entry into the new organization, henceforth known as the Conference.

Rev. O. J. Hatlestad immediately raised the standard of revolt by refusing to acknowledge that the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod had been dissolved.[30] In collusion with certain others, who were not satisfied with the St. Ansgar meeting, he promptly issued a call (on September 5) for a meeting of the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod to be held at Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin, on October 5, 1870. Three topics were to be discussed: (1) The revised synodical constitution; (2) the school at Marshall, Wisconsin; and (3) union with the General Council. Such other matters as would properly come before the meeting were also to be discussed.

In answer to this call the following met: Rev. O. J. Hatlestad, president, Revs. S. M. Krogness, D. Lysnes, M. P. Ruh, O. Andrewsen, and A. A. Scheie. The question was immediately raised as to whether the action at St. Ansgar which purported to have dissolved the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod was valid. All present, of course, agreed that it was not valid. The St. Ansgar meeting was merely a free conference, they said, and a conference has no authority to dissolve the body that has brought it into being. Since neither the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod nor the congregations have had an opportunity properly to discuss the mat-

[30] J. A. Bergh, *op. cit.*, 214 ff.

ter, not to speak of ratifying the action, the action is neither binding nor in accord with decent procedure. Inasmuch as the congregations have not joined the Conference, the pastors who rushed headlong into the Conference at St. Ansgar violated the constitution of their congregations, which provide that the pastor shall belong to the same Lutheran synod as the congregation.

With the St. Ansgar proceedings thus summarily pushed aside, the convention declared itself to be a continuation of the organization convention of the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod of June 17, 1870. To make their present status absolutely clear to all concerned, delegate Gjeldstad offered the following resolution, which was unanimously accepted:

> When the synod now takes up this work, it feels constrained to declare that it regards the resolution passed by a few pastors and three delegates at St. Ansgar last August regarding the dissolution of the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod to be both in purpose and in reality merely loose talk, which before any tribunal would prove its own bane.[21]

The Convention thereupon took up the discussion of a constitution prepared before the meeting by Rev. O. J. Hatlestad in consultation with some others; after a few minor changes had been made, this constitution was approved on October 12, 1870. It was decided that copies of this document should be sent to the congregations, whose privilege it was either to accept, reject, or offer amendments, provided the amendments were handed in at least two months before the next meeting. In view of the bitter experiences of the past, it was decided that, though this constitution was thus neither ratified nor put into final form, it should be regarded, nevertheless, as being in force immediately. This act really marks the launching of the *Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod.*

As for the proposed union with the General Council, an Eastern Lutheran body, we may merely remark that in spite of Hatlestad's best efforts the delegates voted against the proposition. Even Dr. Passavant's presence at the meeting failed to convince the Norwegians that they should abandon their own standards and usages in order to become a part of this larger English Lutheran body.

Reverting to routine matters, the Augustana Synod elected as its first officers Rev. O. J. Hatlestad, president, and Rev. S. M. Krogness, secretary. Although the Conference had at St. Ansgar already elected Prof. Weenaas editor of *Lutheraneren* and president of the Marshall (Wisconsin) school, the Norwegian-Danish Augustanans contested these elections and elected Krogness as editor of *Lutheraneren* and Prof. I. Anderson as president of the Marshall school. As we have seen before, the Norwegian-Danish Augustanans succeeded in establishing their property rights to the Mar-

[21] *Ibid.*, 217.

shall school, but the students with one exception went with Prof. Weenaas into the Conference. As for *Lutheraneren,* Prof. Weenaas succeeded in retaining its editorship against Krogness. It, therefore, went to the Conference.

A controversy now naturally arose between the Augustanans and the Conference. The Augustanans maintained that the conference at St. Ansgar had no right to dissolve the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod; the Conference people replied that when the Norwegians left the Scandinavian Augustana Synod they did not have any corporate existence, hence were free to organize whenever and however they chose. The Andover articles were merely temporary, so when the Norwegians organized the Conference at St. Ansgar, they took the only permanent and final steps toward organization that this particular group had taken. Hatlestad, Krogness, Lysnes, and Ruh had, moreover, taken part in the St. Ansgar meeting. When Hatlestad replied that the Norwegian-Danish section of the Augustana Synod had already existed eleven years by the time of the St. Ansgar meeting, it was replied that the Norwegian-Danish section was a part of another synod with which relationships were broken in 1870, leaving the Norwegians and Danes without either synodical connection or corporate existence. If the meeting at St. Ansgar was unconstitutional, why had Hatlestad presided?

As could be expected, neither side would yield; consequently a very sharp controversy ensued, but this died down after a while.

It was too much to be expected that other Lutheran bodies, such as the General Council and the Norwegian Synod, should refrain from freely expressing their opinions in regard to the chief points at issue, these bodies, in the main, agreeing with the Augustana Synod. The Norwegian Synod possibly played the "big brother" to the Augustana Synod the more readily, seeing that Rev. C. L. Clausen, who had resigned from the Norwegian Synod in 1868, was the prime mover in the organization of the Conference at St. Ansgar. Rev. V. Koren of the Norwegian Synod somewhat later spoke of these transactions as "a strange *coup d'état* at St. Ansgar in 1870." [32] But even with the moral support of the General Council and the Norwegian Synod, the Augustana Synod was too badly crippled to hold its own against its much larger opponent, the Conference.

Within the Conference there were some men of real ability. Besides Clausen, it had such men as Weenaas, Oftedal, and Sverdrup, the latter three being professors at Augsburg Seminary, Minneapolis, Minnesota. From their stronghold in Minnesota these men took up the gage of battle against the Norwegian Synod, whose doctrines they gave the general name *Wisconsinisme,* because the Synod leaders lived in Wisconsin. Nothing essentially new was brought out by the opposition to the Synod during this controversy; on the other hand, many obsolete charges, as for instance of Grundt-

[32] Koren, *op. cit.,* II, 129.

vigianism, were again brought forth. The high-water mark was possibly reached by Prof. Oftedal in his *Aaben Erkläring* (Open Declaration) of 1874, a document which the Synod pastors regarded to be so outrageous that they did not even deign to answer it. Fortunately, the date limit of this volume—1872—gives us a fine excuse for dismissing this controversy at this stage, though it was destined to continue between these two bodies for a generation or two. Other questions were naturally introduced to aggravate the situation. But even these apparently irreconcilable elements were united in 1917.

As for Eielsen's Synod, it enjoyed a period of comparative rest from hostilities. The Ellingians disagreed with the Norwegian Synod leaders in regard to Absolution, and possibly also in regard to the Sunday question, but the Ellingians were not regarded as the chief party to any of the Norwegian Synod's controversies at this time. Some hopes were entertained by the Scandinavian Augustanans that a union could be brought about with the Ellingians, and a meeting was held for that purpose in the latter part of September, 1868, near Decorah, Iowa.[33] Rev. Östen Hanson of the Ellingians and Rev. E. Norelius of the Scandinavian Augustanans figured prominently in these deliberations. They took up Eielsen's *Old Constitution* for criticism and found it very faulty. But since the Ellingians admitted its faults, no difficulty was encountered on that point. The Scandinavian Augustana constitution was briefly, but ably, criticized by Rev. Östen Hanson, and here, too, the faults were freely admitted. After articles of agreement had been drawn up, Eielsen raised a moot question: What do the Augustanans think of "laymen's activity"? Since Eielsen received no satisfactory answer, the meeting was adjourned without any further efforts at organic union being made. The chief reason why Eielsen's Synod was left in comparative peace was probably this, that it did not have sufficient strength, either theologically or numerically, to challenge either the Norwegian Synod or the Conference.

In a general way we have now arrived at that event which had a profound influence not only on the Norwegian Synod, but on Norwegian American Lutheranism in general, namely, the Norwegian Synod's entry in 1872 into the Synodical Conference, a loosely knit combination of German Lutheran synods with "Missouri" as the leading factor. Only two other dates (1890 and 1917) in the later history of Norwegian American Lutheranism are fraught with such meaning. These events, however, belong to the second and third stages of the history of Norwegian American Lutheranism, not to the first, to which this study is restricted.

In surveying the field in the memorable year 1872, we discover that Norwegian American Lutheranism has made substantial progress along several lines. For its numerical strength we shall quote

[33] *K. Maanedstidende*, 1868, 145.

Dr. O. M. Norlie of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, one of the foremost statisticians of the Lutheran Church:

> In 1872 there were in the Ellingian Synod 17 pastors, in Augustana 8, in the Conference 36, and in the Norwegian Synod 74, a total of 125. The Synod's 74 pastors had 335 congregations with a total membership of 77,415 [in 1873], the Conference's 36 pastors had 121 congregations with a total membership of 16,409 in 1872. The Augustana and Ellingian pastors must have had 3-4 congregations each, that is, about 100 congregations in all, with a total membership of less than 10,000. At the beginning of this decade there were 150 congregations, at the end of it 550, hence 400 new congregations were formed in 10 years.[84]

In 1872 there were three Norwegian Lutheran schools—Luther College, Augsburg Seminary, and the Marshall (Wisconsin) school, later called Augustana College. Eielsen's group had no school at this time, as we have seen above, and in the absence of schools, Eielsen was forced to ordain some of his more gifted laymen. The Norwegian Synod also ordained quite a few capable laymen in order to supply the ever-increasing demand for ministers. The Synod also received a steady supply of pastors from St. Louis, to which the students from Luther College went to get their theological training. At the end of this period the Norwegian Synod led all the other Norwegian Lutheran bodies in number of pastors, in theological and practical leadership, and in membership. For about two decades it was to be regarded as the chief representative of Norwegian Lutheranism in America. How it lost this position of commanding leadership is intimately bound up with its association with the Synodical Conference in 1872.

Our task is then really finished, but we owe it to our readers to leave a more favorable impression of Norwegian American Lutheranism than we have been able to give so far. We spoke of the controversies between the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod and the Conference. These lasted only twenty years, for in 1890 these warring synods became parties to the union which brought the *United Norwegian Lutheran Church* into existence. Augustana College and Augsburg Seminary both entered the union, but a conflict soon arose about Augsburg Seminary, with the result that "the friends of Augsburg," under the leadership of Prof. Sven Oftedal and Prof. George Sverdrup, withdrew from the United Norwegian Lutheran Church and formed the *Norwegian Lutheran Free Church.* Since the Free Church, as it is commonly called, did not enter the union in 1917, Prof. Weenaas's school, Augsburg Seminary, did not become a part of the *Norwegian Lutheran Church of America* in 1917, while Augustana College did. Each of the Marshall schools thus went its own way also in this instance.

Care was taken at the beginning to show that these conflicts were

[84] O. M. Norlie, *Norsk Lutherske Prester i Amerika,* 27.

entirely inevitable. The Norwegians are intensely interested in religion and their subsequent history amply proves that they have the mental vigor to grapple with some of its most profound aspects. They possess an extremely acute sense of mental sincerity; under no circumstances could they let error in statement or act go unchallenged for fear that they became parties to those errors by silent acquiescence. Besides this, there was ample opportunity for misunderstanding among them. The average man, who had been thoroughly conscious of his power in Norway, demanded that men and measures justify themselves before his august presence in "free" America. His native independence made various experiments possible, and though all of these have not stood the test of time, it was perhaps just as well that these experiments were made. Local pride and local animosities between the various geographical sections from which the Norwegian immigrants came guaranteed at least some support to any cause that might come up, so long as it was *different*. All of these religious controversies, which were invariably carried on in dead earnest, gave opportunity for the development of a fine theological sense all along the line, the average layman studying very profound theological questions in order that he might give answer to those who gainsaid him.

Now a word to the reader. Though he might not agree with all that the leaders of Norwegian American Lutheranism said and did, it is to be hoped that he has a fair idea of the various leaders and their views. Their shortcomings have not been toned down merely to win favor for them. On the other hand, it is to be hoped that these men, whose weakness and strength is brought out into the day, do not fail to excite that sympathy which we feel, for instance, for Bible characters whose very frailties make us feel kinship to them. An attempt has been made to write this history as *it is*, not as any one might desire it to be. The period that just now closes fails to show the large bearing ideas and principles underlying each one of these discussions, but a second volume would bring this out wonderfully. The author has been tempted to point these out, but he has realized that an intelligent understanding of them cannot be given in a few words. The reader in most instances stands just where the actors in this great human drama stood in 1872—before the closed curtain of the future. This much can be said, that in spite of all the discouragements and all the complications at the end of this period—1872—the story will eventually resolve itself into a most gratifyingly happy ending. After rain comes sunshine; these fierce storms which threatened the sturdy green tree only cleared away the dry limbs of prejudice and misunderstanding.

We must not forget that nearly all that here has been told has taken place in a very short time. Rev. Elling Eielsen and Rev. C. L. Clausen were ordained in 1843; in 1846 the first synod was organized, in 1853 the second. Controversies about slavery, "laymen's activity," and the Sunday question were begun in about 1860 and

settled within that decade. Augsburg Seminary, Augustana College, and Luther College were founded during this same time, Red Wing Seminary a little later. In 1870 two more synods were formed—all of this within less than one generation. When one considers the great problems of pioneer life itself; the problems of pioneer church life; the problems of organization and constitutional development; the problems of institutional development, including the founding of four colleges; the problems of expansion; the problems of a very acute theology—one must say that these pioneers showed an activity, a courage, and a resourcefulness that is not easily matched in any group in America.

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Introductory. A few definitions are necessary in this connection. 1. By bibliography I mean any written material in any form which I have used directly or indirectly in the preparation of this book. 2. By primary sources I mean first-hand accounts either by a contemporary or by one who has interviewed a contemporary. 3. By secondary sources I mean second-hand contact with the facts; as, for instance, where authors have depended on other authors for facts and figures. In some cases it is extremely difficult to draw the line between primary and secondary sources. Some articles can properly be classed as both primary and secondary.

In my attempt to reproduce not only the facts of the history of early Norwegian American Lutheranism, but also the very spirit of the times, I have been forced to go outside the realm of strictly historical literature in my quest of these subtle elements. This explains why certain books are listed that might seem out of place in a bibliography on serious history.

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